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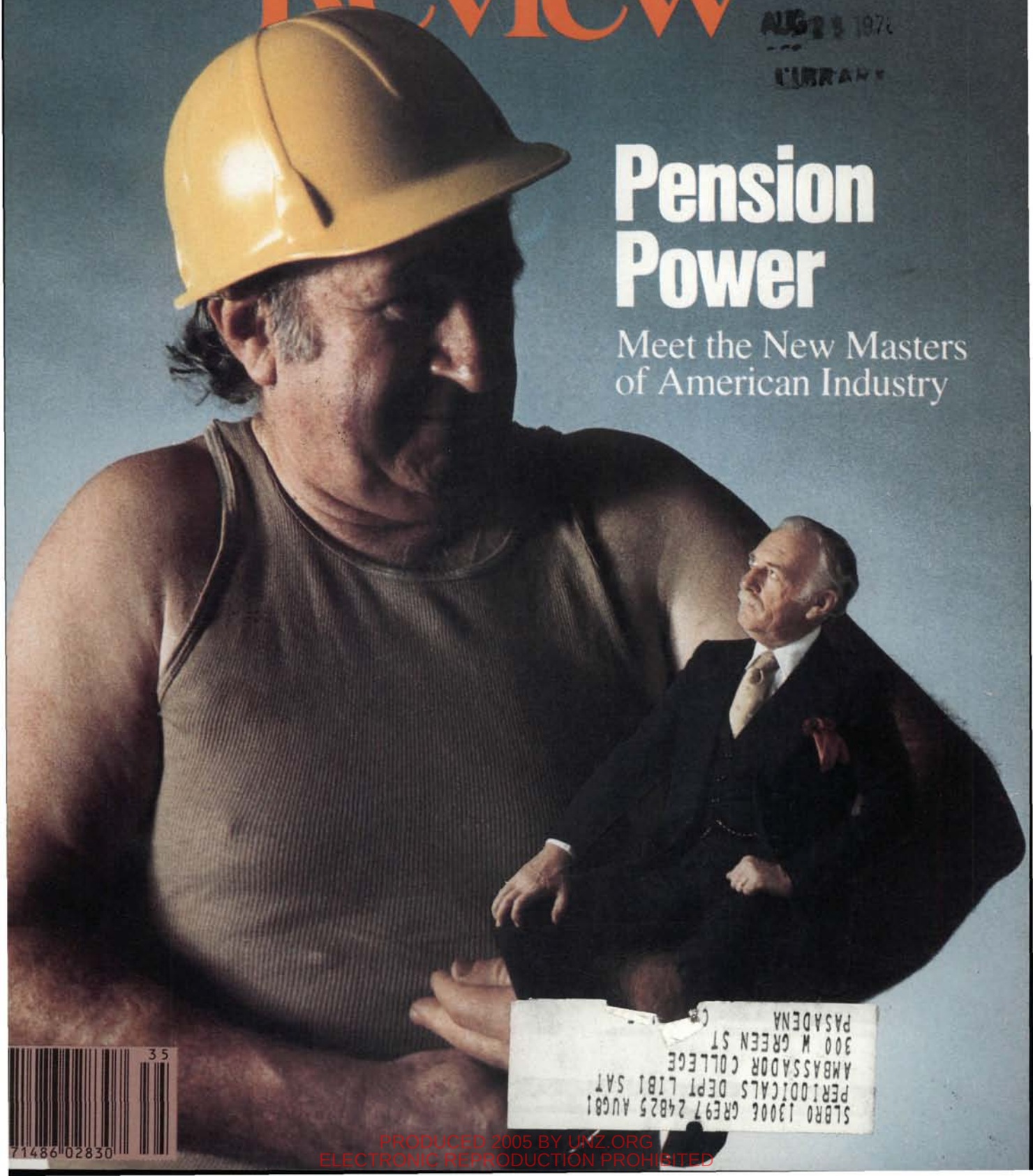

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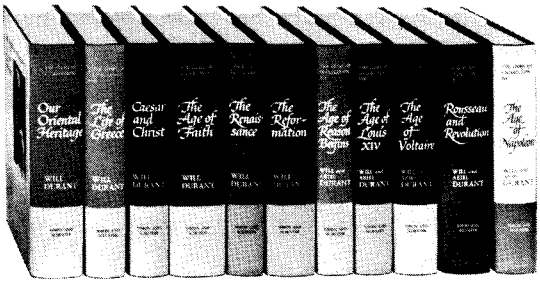

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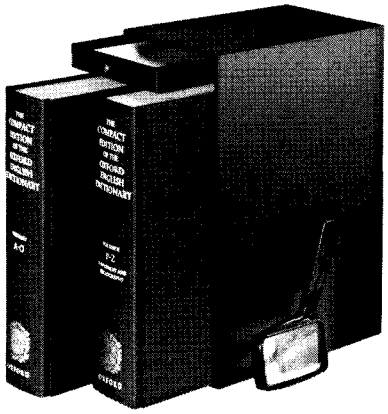

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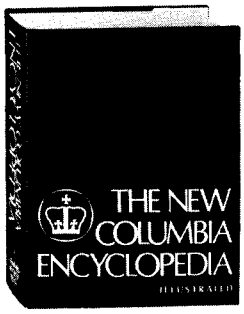

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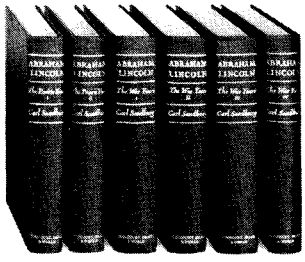

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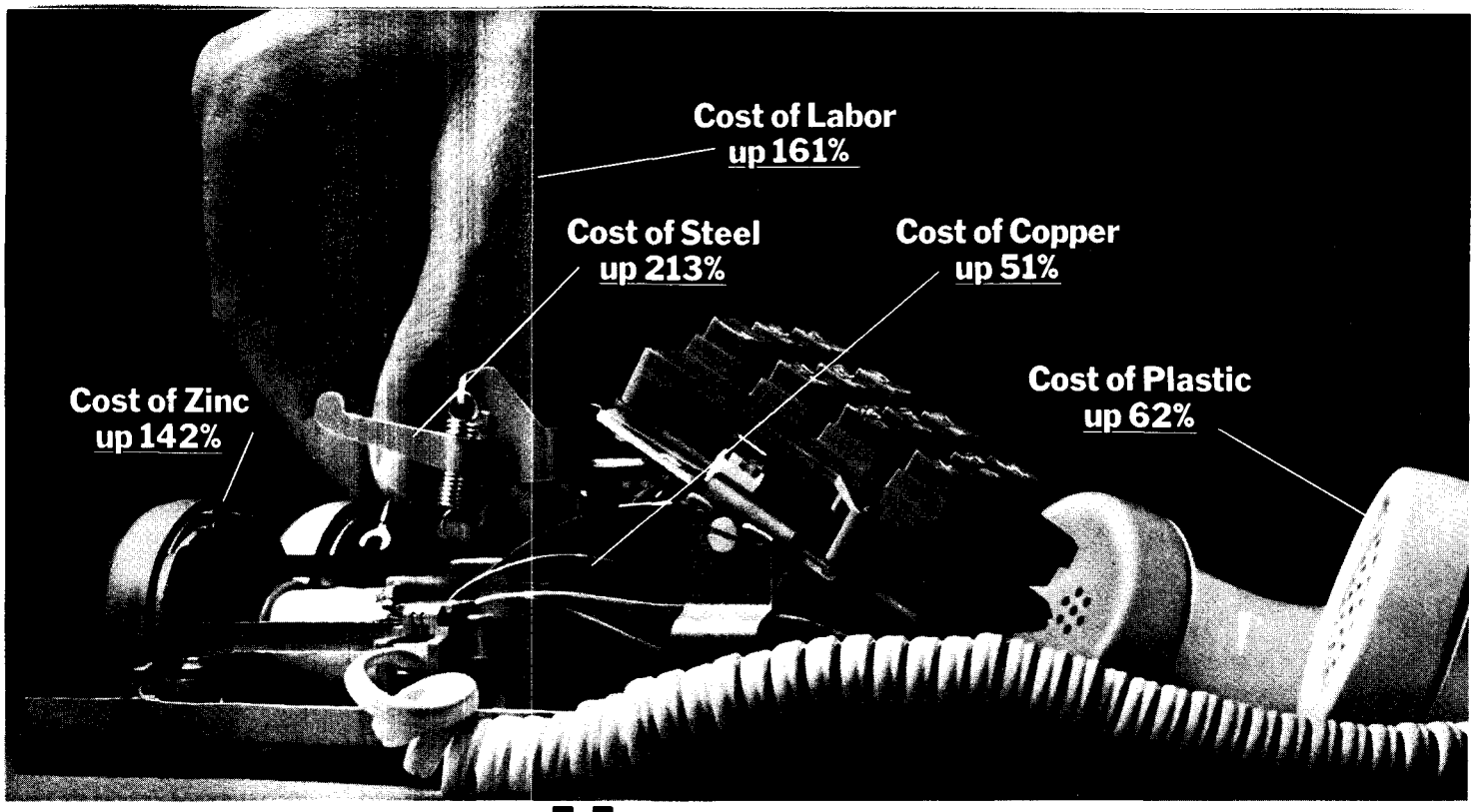

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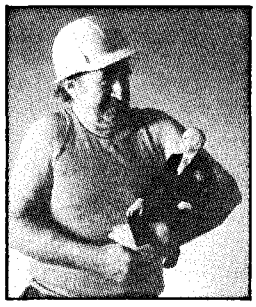

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LETTERS

An Aye for National Health

I couldn't agree more with Robert Claiborne ["Why We Can't Afford National Health Insurance," May 13] that we can't afford national health insurance *unless* we make some rather basic changes in the way in which we pay for and deliver health care. In my view, we can't rationalize our system of organizing and delivering health care and get a handle on costs other than through national health insurance. It would be impossible to reform and improve our health-care system in a piecemeal fashion; we've had years of experience to prove this point.

Medical-care costs are out of control. The past fiscal year we spent $163 billion for medical care, and that represents $737 for every man, woman, and child. That amount was close to $23 billion more than it was the previous year. Federal expenditures alone rose by $6.7 billion.

More national health care expenditures mean more taxes, greater health insurance premium payments, and larger out-of-pocket contributions. The average family now works one month a year just to support our medical care "nonsystem." And it's not getting any better. The Congressional Budget Office, an independent arm of Congress, estimates we will spend $252 billion in fiscal year 1981 *without* any national health insurance. According to the CBO, we could *save* $29 billion in 1981 if Congress were to enact an NHI program with strong cost controls.

We are in this dilemma because we have an irrational system for paying for medical services. Physicians set their own rates; health insurance companies merely increase their premiums to keep up with higher prices. Primary-care physicians receive less reimbursement than specialists for treating the same disease. Hospitals enjoy cost reimbursement: The greater the costs, the larger the reimbursement.

A national health insurance program that incorporates cost controls and encourages delivery system reform is the only means of resolving the problems of financing and furnishing medical care to all our citizens. The public, by a margin of two to one, is in favor of national health insurance that relies on the best efforts of the public and private sectors. I believe national health insurance can be achieved and, with it, the orderly reform of quality and cost-efficient medical care for America.

Senator Edward M. Kennedy
Chairman
Senate Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research

A Host of Nuclear Reactions

I have just read Peter Ognibene's piece ["Living With the Bomb: How 'Safe' Is Nuclear Pollution?" June 24] in which he states that "The AEC and its successors have had three decades in which they could have undertaken detailed studies of the somatic and genetic effects of radiation, but they did not."

Since October 1, 1951, I have been a member of the Mammalian Genetics Section of the Biology Division of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory. Our job has been to determine the extent of genetic radiation damage in mammals in order to provide guidelines for estimating genetic hazards to the human species. I have enjoyed complete academic freedom here; I am free to plan my own experiments, interpret my own data, and to publish them in open literature without censure. The data from this project has provided the scientific basis for establishing permissible human exposure by both national and international committees. The leader of this project, Dr. W. L. Russell, received the E. O. Lawrence Award for his contributions in this field. All of this research was funded by AEC, ERDA, and now, DOE.

"Living With the Bomb" is sensationalist journalism. You owe an apology to the AEC, ERDA, DOE, and the hundreds of people who have spent their lives working on the problems of somatic and genetic effects of radiation.

E. F. Oakberg
Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Peter Ognibene replies: The studies at Oak Ridge of the effects of radiation on mice are well known. My concern, explicitly stated, was that *no* studies have been undertaken of the "genetic consequences to children whose parents were occupationally exposed to radia-

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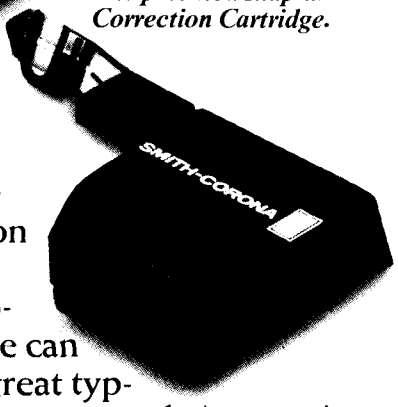

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LETTERS

tion." Three decades ago the government decided that the security of the United States required nuclear weapons and that workers would have to be exposed to radiation to build them. Why were no long-range studies of the health and genetic effects of plutonium on humans begun at that time or soon thereafter? I await the explanation of Dr. Oakberg or any other member of the "nuclear establishment."

Susan Schiefelbein ["Is Nuclear Power a License to Kill?" June 24] would have us believe that nuclear power plants are causing a cancer epidemic. She bases this on an assertion made by a Dr. Gofman that the hundred millirems of natural radiation to which everyone in the United States is exposed annually cause 20,000 deaths. He then uses the 10-millirem design limit on nuclear power plants to conclude that the same 200 million people are each getting 10 more millirems, causing another 2,000 deaths a year. Surely he ought to know better than that. When a power plant exposes even a few people to as much as five millirems, it is shut down and the condition corrected. Even if each of the 70 nuclear plants in the country had one such radiation event a year, 200, not 200 million would receive extra radiation. Using Dr. Gofman's figures, this amounts to one alleged death every 500 years.

Schiefelbein associates rising cancer rates with nuclear power in six large states. Since each of these states has millions of inhabitants, a rise in the cancer rate for the entire state would mean that the small communities around the few existing nuclear plants would have to be contributing a large number of cancer cases. No such increase has ever been found.

There are some good reasons for opposing nuclear power: Political concern for proliferation of weapons and economic considerations involved with decommissioning obsolete plants. However, to be so convinced of the righteousness of a cause that one feels free to propagandize on its behalf is a good definition of a Watergate mentality. To do this and then accuse the government of covering up, is a better definition of *chutzpah!*

While I use my office address, this is a private matter and in no way reflects any commitment of the organization by which I am employed.

Arno A. Penzias
Director, Bell Laboratories
Holmdel, N.J.

Susan Schiefelbein replies: Dr. Penzias may be disturbed to discover that nuclear power plants are *not* required to shut down after exposing "even a few people to five millirem." The Humbolt Bay plant, for example, released 250 millirem in a single year and continued to operate.

In fact, the five-millirem figure is nothing more than an objective to be considered as a plant is being built. Once it begins to operate, it is asked to keep its emissions "as low as reasonably achievable." A plant is not required to shut down unless its radioactive emissions are so great that the general populace would, in a single year, be exposed to a 500 millirem total body dose or a 3,000 millirem skin dose. No one can say, moreover, whether plants adhere to these limits; they are not officially monitored but are on their honor to report their own offenses.

Nor is Dr. Penzias correct in asserting that cancer rates have not increased in towns adjacent to existing plants. Just such a pattern of increases in the incidence of cancer has been noted in congressional testimony. For example: While the cancer rate for the U.S. as a whole rose 6 percent between 1970 and 1975, it rose 58 percent in Waterford, Connecticut—home of the Millstone nuclear power plant—and 44 percent in New London, only five miles away.

Many Americans are troubled by the fact that government and industry have summarily dismissed such findings. Their concern is a concern for human life; to caricature it as *chutzpah* seems to me as unjust as it is unwarranted.

I wish to congratulate *SR* on its cover story, "Living With the Bomb." I try to follow stories of this kind in a number of periodicals and in my opinion *Saturday Review*'s are of the highest quality. I believe they augur well for the magazine's future under its new leadership.

Daniel Shively
Indiana, Pa.

Kudos to *SR* for taking on the nuclear power Goliath with such candor. It is a daring decision to deal with the issues of nuclear pollution, a subject that when honestly presented usually evokes plaintive cries of "foul" from various segments of the nuclear establishment and the corporate forum that espouses extravagant exploitation of limited resources in the name of economic growth.

Peter Ognibene's account of the incidents building up to "an accident waiting to happen" at Rocky Flats is the story of every nuclear plant. The lucid presentation by Susan Schiefelbein of the stark realities of nuclear pollution is superb!

Leon A. Dickinson, Jr.
New York, N.Y.

N as in Nancy

You can imagine with what disbelief I read the Fine Print page in the June 10 issue ["A Rare Find: 'Two Tales by Charlotte Brontë'"], wherein the first name of the brother of the Brontë sisters is given as Bramwell—not once but twice! The name is Branwell—he was given his mother's maiden name, which was Maria Branwell.

Otherwise, many thanks for Doris Grumbach's small essay on the secret world of the Brontës, a world that gave them so much forbidden pleasure that they referred to it variously as "the infernal world" or "the world below."

Maryon Cigler
Two Rivers, Wis.

Editor's Note: Thank you for you correction. We apologize for the error.

Puzzling News

On the advice of several of our puzzle-loving readers, Saturday Review is changing its practice of printing the answers to puzzles in the same issue in which the puzzles appear. From now on, we will print the answers to the *last* issue's puzzles, together, usually in this space.

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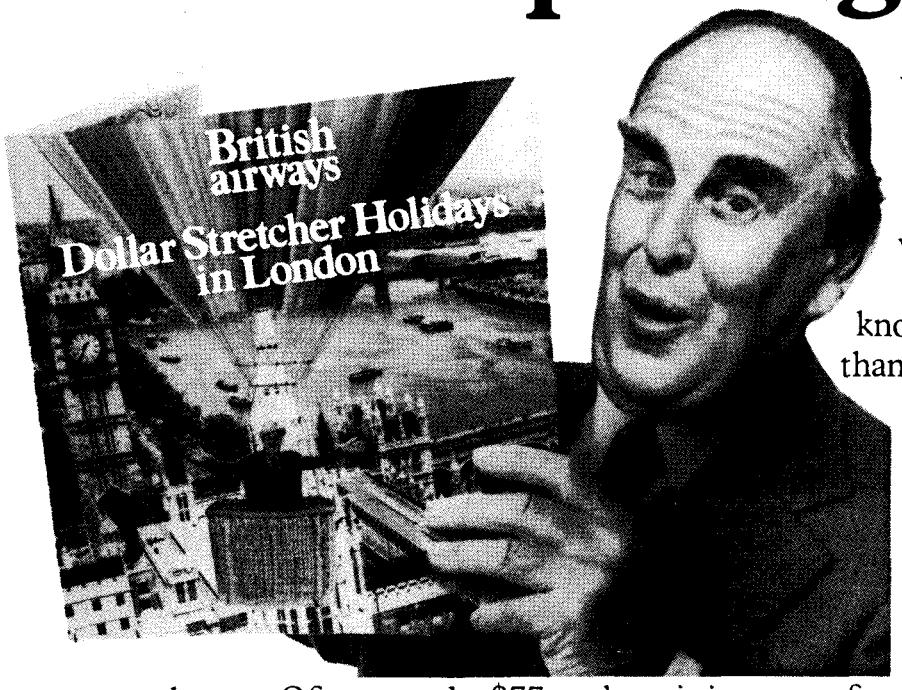

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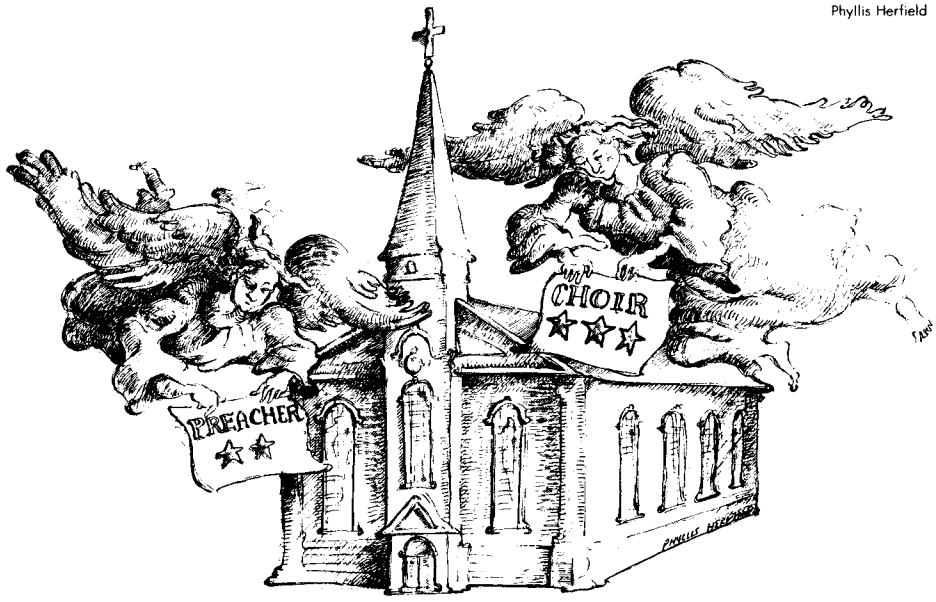
Organs of Opinion

What, a Michelin guide to America's church services? It may happen yet, if George R. Plagenz has his way. For more than a year now, newspaperman Plagenz has been "reviewing" services at Cleveland churches, awarding them up to three stars for excellence in each of four categories: worship service, music, sermon, and friendliness of the congregation. To date, his top ratings have gone to a black storefront church, and to a Baptist church whose members sing hymns with "more gusto than Schlitz."

Plagenz is not some crank taking cheap shots at religion. A Harvard Divinity School graduate, he has been a religion writer at the *Cleveland Press* for eight years, and a churchgoer for more than thirty. He began critiquing churches because, he recently told reporter Thomas C. Fox of the Knight-Ridder News Service, he felt that they "weren't growing, sermons were terrible, worship dragged, and [the] music wasn't what people wanted to hear....The loneliest hours of my life I've spent at coffee hours at churches."

Though Plagenz has many Cleveland church people all shook up and in a soul-searching mood, Daniel Hathaway, the organist at Cleveland's Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, is unmoved by the reporter's complaint that Hathaway plays so loud he drowns out the singing congregation. Says Hathaway about Plagenz's criticism of him, "He's not a competent music judge."

Phyllis Herfield



Low Cuisine

Can a Marxist be a fair-minded food critic? Not on your life, say a dozen London restaurant proprietors who co-signed a fiery letter on the subject to the *Times* of London. The man they were dumping on is left-leaning Christopher Driver, editor of *Good Food Guide*, a much-respected handbook listing Britain's best eating places. The restaurateurs' beef is that Driver takes a class-conscious view of eateries—if the surroundings and clientele are posh he is, they charge, automatically against the place. "Sadly, since Christopher Driver took [the *Guide*] over," the letter says, "a prevailing tone of acid disparagement and snide innuendo has increasingly pervaded the editorial comment."

In a similar letter, British writer Bernard Levin has accused Driver of "believing that enjoying the good things of life is sinful. Mr. Driver seems to find it increasingly difficult to reconcile his work as editor with his beliefs as a Gandhian Christian. That does him great credit. But it also seems to me to suggest that it is time he considers relinquishing the post."

Driver, unabashed, has countered by saying the *Guide* merely reflects the sentiment of thousands of Britons who communicate to him and the other editors their frank feelings about various British restaurants. "I am crying all the way to my press agent," Driver quipped. "These people want a guide made in their own image rather than one based on people's actual experiences—as our guide is."

Down the Drain

When horseplayers hit it big at the track, they nip over to the betting windows and cash in the winning tickets, right? Not necessarily: Last year in New York State alone, almost $5 million in unclaimed winnings ended up being turned over to state officials. What kind of race-goer throws away good money like that? Well, it seems many railbirds are just so overcome by winning on a big race that they keep the ticket as a souvenir of the ecstatic moment. But incredible as it sounds, insiders say most of the uncashed tickets have simply been lost, or discarded by mistake. Psychoanalysts have long contended that all-out gamblers have a self-destructive urge to lose, and New York's $5 million discarded-ticket kitty is mute evidence that in this case the doctors may be right.

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Pension Power: Meet the New Masters of American Industry

by Jeremy Rifkin and Randy Barber

Joan Hall

JAMES BAKER works in a factory. For 25 years he has contributed an average of $10 per week to a pension plan that will enable him to retire with a modest source of continued income. Although he has many friends, Baker has never considered himself to be a person of power or influence. What he does not realize is that his weekly $10, combined with the contributions of millions of other pension-plan participants across the country, constitutes the single largest source of capital for the American economy. If Baker and his fellow pension participants joined together to direct the investment of their pension capital, they could well end up giving orders to most of the captains of industry.

Capital is what fuels an economic system. It is all of the dollars invested in or available for investment in business enterprises. While most investment capital is still *controlled* by a handful of financial institutions, corporations, and individuals, a significant portion of it is now *owned* by a surprising new "class" of investors—the pension-fund "participant." Pension funds—which now stand at $500 billion and are growing by 10 percent a year—already own between 20 and 25 percent of the stock of companies on the New York and American exchanges.

In addition, pension funds own fully 20 percent of the financial securities in the country (including corporate stocks and bonds, state and local government bonds, federal treasury and agency notes). Within seven years, pension funds will be worth more than one trillion dollars and, according to estimates by the New York Stock Exchange, they are expected to provide almost one-half of all the external capital raised by U.S. corporations in the next decade.

This huge pool of capital is invested by money managers whose sole purpose, at least in theory, is to maximize the value of the investments for the beneficiaries. Recently, however, the notion has begun to spread that those who own the funds should have some say in their management. At the same time, people have started to become aware that no investment decision is "neutral," and that increasing resource scarcity means that every decision to invest a dollar in one place rather than in another has social and political ramifications. This new realization is a direct result of the changes in the economy over the past 10 years.

As little as a decade ago, most people thought of the economy as a continually expanding "pie," with little or no constraints to growth. Everyone's main concern was to be able to share in the growing bounty provided by the "Great American Bread Machine." Now, that vision is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

Many urban areas, primarily those in the industrial north, are experiencing a long-term economic decline. The entire corporate/banking structure is finding it difficult to sustain growth and generate acceptable levels of profits. Energy, water, and many other basic resources are becoming scarcer and the subject of bitter disputes. The major "product" of advanced industrial civilization would now appear to be pollution and, with it, cancer. Vast areas of the North American continent have been irreparably damaged. The main concern of many citizens and communities today is simply to keep afloat. Inflation, the practical enforcer of real limits to growth, has caused the beleaguered middle class to enforce its own limits on taxation and government. Millions of our citizens, especially minority youths, have no prospects of *ever* finding a decent job, and tens of millions more are scared that the jobs they now have will disappear in the next few years. And around the world, there are demands for a "new international economic order"—based on redistributing wealth from the "advanced" to the "developing" nations.

Adapted From The North Will Rise Again: Pensions, Politics and Power in the 1980s *by Jeremy Rifkin and Randy Barber.* *Copyright © 1978 by the Center for Urban Education, and published by permission of the publisher, Beacon Press, Boston.*

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ALL OF THIS POINTS to what will certainly become *the* crucial issue of the next decade: How will society's basic economic resources be used? That is, how will *capital*, the lifeblood of any economy, be allocated? This issue will be addressed in thousands of different ways: through tax policies, government incentives, welfare, aid to cities, regulations, foreign aid, technology transfers, bail-outs, buy-outs, protests, confrontations, and possibly even wars. But whatever the specific concern, the underlying issue will be the control and direction of capital.

Control over pension funds means control over capital allocation and economic planning, which is now concentrated in just a handful of financial institutions. The majority of nonfederal pension funds, private or public, has turned their assets over to banks and insurance companies to invest for them. At the end of 1975, the 100 largest banks controlled over $145 billion in pension funds and the top ten controlled some $80 billion. Bankers Trust and Morgan Guaranty each manages nearly $15 billion in pension assets. Insurance companies manage more than $80 billion worth of pension funds as well. Even more surprising is the fact that the average individual portfolio manager working for a bank, insurance company, or investment firm has control over some $112 million in pension assets.

There are several different types of pension funds. By far the largest—more than $270 billion—are private pension plans. State and local government pension funds are worth some $135 billion, and federal government retirement systems have about $100 billion. While federal pension funds are invested entirely in U.S. treasury issues, private, state, and local funds are overwhelmingly invested in stocks and bonds of major U.S. corporations.

Viewed in the context of a contracting economic pie, pension funds assume a special importance for the depressed and declining sectors of the U.S. economy. A relatively little-known fact is that more than half of all private, state, and local pension assets—more than $200 billion—belong to workers in the older industrial, high-wage, unionized regions of the country.

At present, these funds are invested by the financial institutions like any other pension fund. But this may soon change. Pension funds are presently undermining the very economic security—both present and future—of these sectors of the economy. While they are accumulating billions of dollars of deferred wages from well paid, largely unionized workers in the northern corridor of the country, the financial community is *distributing* this investment capital to the Sunbelt and abroad, where wages, taxes, social services, and government regulations are low. As the economic crisis of the unions and northern states deepens, competing claims for the use of pension assets are bound to arise. This becomes clear when we examine some of the specific problems of the depressed industrial north and the beleaguered labor movement.

The basic problem facing the Northeast, according to Albert Rees, former chairman of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, is that it is no longer attracting private capital. Census Bureau figures show that between 1967 and 1972 new capital expenditures in New England went up only 1.6 percent; for the Middle Atlantic states it was only a slightly higher 4.1 percent. In contrast, new capital expenditures for the South Atlantic states rose 37.8 percent during the same period. Between 1947 and 1972, the metropolitan areas of New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, Boston, and Pittsburgh suffered a 30 percent decline in their share of new national capital expenditures. All of this means that the industrial north is simply not getting the investments it needs to update its plants, improve distribution systems—in short, maintain existing employment and create new jobs.

THE EFFECT of this shift in capital investments from the northern corridor to other areas of the country is dramatically illustrated by employment trends. Between 1960 and 1975, manufacturing employment declined by 9.9 percent in New England and 13.7 percent in the Mideast. In the Great Lakes states manufacturing jobs increased only by a 3.2 percent, while employment in the nation as a whole was growing by 8.3 percent. Translated into numbers of jobs, the statistics are even more grim. In Massachusetts alone, the textile, leather, and food processing industries have lost more than 200,000 jobs in less than three decades. In the Akron, Ohio area, the big four rubber producers—Firestone, Goodyear, General, and B.F. Goodrich—have eliminated over 24,000 manufacturing jobs since 1950. In less than seven years, New York City has lost a whopping 647,000 jobs of different kinds, and in less than five years, Philadelphia has lost nearly one-quarter of all its factory jobs. In city after city along an industrial corridor stretching from Back Bay in Boston to Chicago's lake front, factories are being padlocked and boarded up as company after company takes off for new industrial parks both overseas and in the nation's emerging Sunbelt.

Similar considerations, combined with tax advantages and less burdensome rules for conducting business, have persuaded many companies to move their operations abroad. Some people might be surprised to learn that two out of every 10 GM vehicles and three out of every 10 Chryslers are made abroad, or that 95 percent of all radios and tape recorders and 50 percent of all black-and-white TV sets are assembled in other countries. Smith-Corona makes typewriters in Singapore, National Cash Register makes much of its equipment in Taiwan and Japan, Sears Roebuck makes shoes in Spain and H. J. Heinz now makes its tomato-paste products in Portugal.

Industry by industry, the pattern is the same. U.S. global corporations are shifting their industrial base to other countries. For example, 33 percent of the total assets of the chemical industry, 33 percent of the pharmaceutical industry, 40 percent of the consumer-goods industry, and 75 percent of

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the electrical industry are located abroad.

The magnitude of this exodus is without parallel. American companies established over 8,000 subsidiaries abroad (mostly in manufacturing) between 1945 and 1970. The effect on domestic employment and particularly union jobs has been staggering. Between 1966 and 1970, U.S.-based global firms had an employment growth rate abroad that was 3.5 times that of the increase in domestic employment. Today, one out of every three employees of American global corporations is located outside the U.S.

Capital investments and jobs are indeed moving South. Between 1970 and 1975, more than 2.5 million northerners packed their bags and headed for the Sunbelt. While the Midwest and Northeast have been losing jobs left and right since 1960, manufacturing jobs in the Southeast have risen by 43.3 percent and in the Southwest by 67 percent in the same period. The Sunbelt is now one big business boomtown—manufacturing jobs in the South now outnumber those in the Northeast. The only conditions for becoming a part of this grand new corporate South is an antiunion loyalty pledge. In other words, corporations are moving South for three reasons: no unions, no strikes, and cheap wages.

According to the U.S. Labor Department, unions lost almost 600,000 members between 1974 and 1976. Most of these losses came from the 16 Northeast and Midwest states, where over 60 percent of all trade union membership is concentrated. It is no coincidence that these are the very states that the multinationals are leaving.

"The South is just waiting to be organized," said Samuel Gompers, the founder of the AFL in 1886. And the situation is still the same today. Only 13 percent of southern workers belong to labor unions (as opposed to a national average of 25 percent). In North Carolina, the most heavily industrialized state in the South, only 6.9 percent of the work force is organized, as compared to 38 percent in New York. Moreover, the unions' share of the southern work force is continuing to shrink. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, unions lost ground in eight of 11 states of the South between 1964 and 1974.

THE ABSENCE of a strong labor movement is reflected in the low wage scales of the region. In 1970, wages in the South were 20 percent lower than the national average. While the average hourly wage for the production workers outside the South was $4.40 in 1974, it was only $3.60 in the South. Of course, that is part of the reason why the corporations and new businesses are relocating. Even a giant such as General Motors, which has long fostered a semi-cooperative union policy in its northern plants, is now fiercely resisting union organizing in its new divisions in the South. For example, in its Clinton, Mississippi plant, GM has taken a hard line against UAW attempts to organize the operation—and it is not hard to understand why. The average hourly wage of a GM worker in the nonunion Clinton plant is $1.05 an hour less than a similar worker in its Packard Electric Division in Warren, Ohio. That adds up to a $2 million savings for one company in just one plant alone.

Ironically, much of the private capital now severing its partnership bonds with organized labor and the older industrial states belongs to the very power blocks it is deserting. For years, the unions and the northern states have been literally chasing after their own funds in what amounts to one of the most macabre Catch-22s in contemporary economic history. The fact is, union pension-fund moneys are being used to destroy union jobs and state pension-fund moneys are being used to undermine state economies. It's utterly fantastic—a contradiction of such monumental proportions that it would be amusing were it not for the cruel harvest it is reaping on the parties involved.

As the debate over the allocation of increasingly scarce capital resources intensifies, the issue of control over pension funds will inevitably assume major proportions. Although the direction of pension-fund investments is ostensibly an *economic* issue, it will most certainly be fought out in the *political* arena. *Pensions & Investments* magazine recently pointed out: "As pension funds become an even more dominant force in the capital markets, their collective investment practices will, for better or worse, determine the future of the U.S. economy. Up until now, pension funds have operated in a politically neutral netherworld when it comes to the overall impact of their investment practices. But the rumblings of change are beginning to be heard."

Some of those "rumblings" are coming from important northern politicians and unionists. "The idea of reinvesting pension funds in the region from which they come is a very attractive one," says Representative Michael Harrington (D-Mass.), chairman of the congressional Northeast/Midwest Economic Advancement Coalition. He is seconded by Representative Henry Reuss (D-Wisc.), chairman of the powerful House Banking Committee: "Pension funds represent a viable means of helping to meet the fundamental needs of the Northeast and Midwest... they deserve consideration."

LAST DECEMBER, the AFL-CIO national convention adopted a resolution recognizing the immense economic clout of union members' pension funds. This resolution called for increased union-fund investment in mortgages and construction, and urged "that the substantial financial power of AFL-CIO unions and negotiated plans be entrusted to financial institutions whose investment policies are not inimical to the welfare of working men and women." The importance of the AFL-CIO resolution was underscored in March of this year by a case involving the corporate and financial ties of J.P. Stevens & Co., the nation's second largest textile manufacturer. Though J.P. Stevens has been found guilty of scores of labor-law violations, up to this year the company seemed immune to any kind of

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pressure. Stevens also enjoyed seemingly wide support in the corporate/financial community, with interlocking directors from New York Life Insurance Company, Avon, Sperry Rand, and Manufacturers Hanover Trust, among other major companies and institutions.

Last fall, the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union decided to publicize these ties, in an effort to isolate Stevens from the rest of the corporate financial community. The first target was Manufacturers Hanover, which had two J.P. Stevens directors on its board: David Mitchell, who is also chairman of the board of Avon, and James Finley, chairman of Stevens. Union leaders, pension trustees, political figures, and union-member depositors inundated the bank with letters and postcards objecting to its ties with Stevens. In itself, this deluge of correspondence probably wouldn't have phased the giant financial institution. Except for one thing: The unions that were expressing their outrage over the Stevens-Manufacturers Hanover link had at least one billion dollars in pension funds deposited with the bank. Despite repeated denials that the bank was feeling any discomfort from all this pressure, both Mitchell and Finley were forced off Manufacturers' board. Two weeks later, David

Mitchell resigned from the Stevens board as well, stating that he was afraid that his own company, Avon, would also get caught in the union cross fire.

Many other unions are now looking to see how this strategy can be applied to their own problems. The lesson, says Ray Rogers, the mastermind of the union's J.P. Stevens Corporate Campaign, is simple: "You have to confront power with power." Al Zack, official spokesman for the AFL-CIO, agrees: "I think it's a coming thing. Unions are going to get tougher with these kinds of situations." In fact, the Social Security Department of the AFL-CIO is at present considering a "union label" investment strategy whereby labor can begin to classify the union policies of all companies listed on the stock and bond exchanges. They can agree to use their pension assets in any of the following ways: Investing only in unionized companies; withdrawing investments from companies pursuing a runaway shop policy; buying or selling shares in companies they are attempting to organize in order to influence management to accept unionization. It may even be possible for unions to use their shares to elect union representatives to boards of directors of companies and banks in order to influence their investment policies. Unions might even buy out companies and convert them into union-owned, worker-run firms.

Unions could also set up their own pooled investment trusts or labor banks to allow them even greater flexibility and control over investment policies. Pooled union investment trusts already exist for the purchase of mortgages of union-built structures. This same principle could well be applied to the purchase of corporate stocks and bonds. Similarly, there is no reason why unions could not set up labor banks for the purpose of recycling union members' funds within the unionized sector of the economy. With alternative financing mechanisms available to them, unions would be in a better position to "influence" commercial banks and other financial institutions to stop lending money to flagrantly antiunion companies. Needless to say, labor banks could also enter into joint projects with progressively led state and local governments, just as traditional banks do now.

Unlike the unions, the states are more likely to attempt to develop unilateral pension-fund strategies: First, because their past track record of mutual cooperation is poor compared to the unions; and second, because the larger states such as New York and Illinois have greater funds at their disposal to affect economic planning and capital allocation decisions. Still, the value of a unified regional approach to pooling resources would be enormous. Together, the 16 states of the Midwest and Northeast have claims on over $75 billion in pension-fund capital. The potential power of pooling their capital would be far greater than if each state decided to go it alone. The fact that these states have already recognized the need to forge a political coalition [see "Sunbelt vs Frostbelt," *SR*, April 15, 1978] to implement regional solutions to their shared economic problems, is a sign that joint cooperation with capital investments is now within the realm of possibility.

There are a number of initial steps that states can take by themselves. For one, they should determine the real impact of public pension investments on the state's economy. Several northern states and cities are now considering just such a move. The Wisconsin Center for Public Policy, supported by public and private grants, is studying the economic impact of the investment of the state's $4 billion in public funds on its beneficiaries.

To effectively redirect public funds, states will need to have a wide range of financial mechanisms at their disposal. Several years ago, the New York State legislature came close to passing a bill creating a state bank for handling public funds. Such a bank could have provided the state with the basis for funneling public pension funds and other state moneys into places where they would do the most good for New York citizens and taxpayers. In California, which has $34 billion in public funds and many of the same problems as the industrial North, a proposal for a state bank received the support of the state AFL-CIO and a number of important political figures. North Dakota already has a state bank and other states have created relatively modest mechanisms to help create new jobs, prohibit banks from "red-lining" in housing investments, and encourage the development of new products and technologies that would be produced locally.

Rather than examining the potential of using public and union pension funds to make capital allocation decisions, a great number of state governments still continue to pin their hopes for economic survival on convincing the private sector to remain in their region through the bestowal of more and more public gifts. But even this strategy has begun to reach a point of diminishing returns as public treasuries run out of gifts. This is exactly what happened in New York City in 1975

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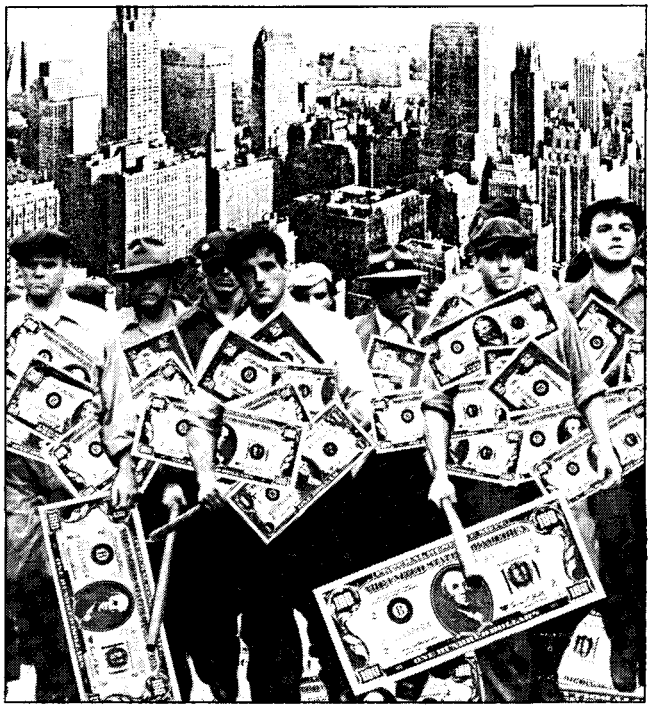

when the country learned that the city was facing imminent bankruptcy.

With the financial community's complete lack of confidence in New York's Big MAC bonds, the city was at the end of the line in 1975. The only options left were to either file bankruptcy and become a ward of state and federal governments, or find an alternative means of financing its bonds. The only large capital pool that the city could claim was the municipal pension funds, which amounted to some $11 billion. Through a series of complicated maneuvers, including the enactment of special legislation by the state and a special exemption granted by the federal government, New York was able to secure commitments for the investment of $3.1 billion of public employees' retirement funds in the city's bonds, allowing it, temporarily, to forestall collapse.

Though the public employees were not thrilled about bailing the city out, they realized they had little choice. Without the pension-fund loan, the city would not have had enough operating funds to pay its thousands of employees their future paychecks.

The New York City bail-out is a good example of what can happen when local and state governments wait until it is almost too late to assume control over their own pension capital. Had New York taken the initiative years earlier and begun to reclaim control over its own capital pool, it might never have reached the point of insolvency. Like other city and state governments, it saw what was happening but refused to act. The flight of jobs and capital from the city took place over two decades, plenty of time to begin preparing an alternative approach to economic planning using public pension funds as a tool. New York failed to prepare itself, and as a result, the city itself failed in the end. This is a lesson for other governments in the northern tier who are facing the same long-range prospects as New York City. They can continue to allow themselves to be economically manipulated by the private financial community, even allowing it to continue to use their own pension-fund moneys as its chief economic weapon. Or states and cities can begin pressing their claims now for control over this capital pool as well as over economic planning and participation. as the private sector phases out its business dealing in their local regions.

If municipal and state governments begin to push for a greater role in economic planning and capital allocation, they will need the support of working people in their regions. With organized labor directly representing the interest of 32 percent of the work force in the northern states, it is the single most important potential ally in any plans to restructure these regional economies. Labor's problems are similar to the problems facing the states. Their mutual survival depends on their forging a mutual economic alliance.

State and local governments will require support from labor for innovative investment programs. Unions in the private sector will need state-sponsored investment mechanisms and guarantees to meet federally mandated prudence standards. Many of these efforts can be modeled after the whole range of government subsidies to private industry that presently exist (industrial development bonds, loan guarantees, etc.). Under such an alliance public planning commissions would need to be created. Public banks would need to be legislated. Public enterprises would need to be established. Community development corporations would need to be organized. Worker-run companies would need to be set up. Union and state pension funds would need to work closely together (or be pooled) in mapping out these broad economic investment and capital allocation decisions. Unions and the public would need to be fully represented on the boards and in the boardrooms of these alternative institutions.

IN THE FINAL analysis, both rank-and-file unionists and the general public must decide who they want to invest their pension funds: the banks and insurance companies, or their unions and local and state governments. Unlike the banks, unions and local governments are responsible to their constituents and, therefore, they have to give thought to employment and local economic development in investing their funds. It is true that in a declining economy, unions and state governments are not likely to do any better than the private financial institutions at maximizing returns on investment. For the millions of workers trapped in the northern industrial corridor, however, the issue boils down to choosing one of two options. Beneficiaries can continue to allow banks to set the priorities for pension capital investment and to invest their pension moneys in other regions or other countries. Or they can choose to have their funds invested—with investment priorities that serve *their true interests*—by unions and state and local governments guaranteeing continued employment and production for the local economy.

Organized labor and the northern state governments, then, are each in a position to assume an ownership role in the American economy. They can begin to take part in broad economic planning decisions and can also start exercising influence over what is produced, how things are produced, and where that production is to be located. In an era of very real constraints on economic growth, this is the only rational—and responsible—course for them to take.

In the words of the late Senator Philip Hart, the future battle for control over pension capital will be "the central structural and policy problem of the American economy and society for years to come." For the victors in this contest, the reward will amount to control over much of the future economic life of the nation. ◉

Jeremy Rifkin and Randy Barber are codirectors of the People's Business Commission in Washington, D.C., and the authors of The North Will Rise Again: Pensions, Politics and Power in the 1980s. *Their book will be published later this month by Beacon Press.*

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SCIENCELETTER

Forecast: Poisonous Rain

by Albert Rosenfeld

ACID RAIN — an odd-sounding, disquieting phrase to those of us who grew up thinking of rain as something blessed and purifying that drops gently from the heavens. Yet now, suddenly, acid rain—it might even be called poison rain—is being recognized as a growing threat to some forms of life on earth. Already, many a lake has been emptied of fish, and other species of land and water life are considered to be in similar danger. Soils have been damaged, and the growth of plants, crops, and forests retarded by acidic rainwater. The weathering and erosion of metal, stone buildings, and monuments have accelerated, and no one can reassure us that human health is not also being threatened.

The increasing acidity of the rain is due mainly to the burning of fossil fuels, especially high-sulfur coal, now that the lower-sulfur varieties are in short supply. In our current energy crunch, we are planning to rely more and more heavily on coal and will probably increase its use manyfold over the next few decades. It seems that the raindrops falling on our heads will not grow gentler. In fact, says plant pathologist Leon S. Dochinger, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, "Acid rain is perhaps the most serious environmental dilemma of this century."

One facet of the dilemma is that not much can be done about acid rain on a local scale. Take a superb recreational area such as New York's Adirondack Park. It was set aside legislatively to remain "forever wild"—and certainly nothing has been done within the park's extensive boundaries to pollute it. Yet a recent survey by Cornell biologist Carl L. Schofield of more than 200 of its high-altitude lakes revealed that more than half were dangerously acidic—and of these, many of them favorite fishing spots in former years, 90 percent were now devoid of fish. Where did the acid come from? It came down in the rain and ran off in the snow. The offending pollutants might have originated almost anywhere to the west and been carried aloft and eastward by prevailing winds. Among the prime suspects, in this case, are the huge ore smelters at Sudbury, Ontario.

Ironically, the increased acid-rain problem in many parts of the country is the direct result of antipollution measures taken in other areas. At Sudbury, as at so many other industrial sites, smokestacks have been raised high to carry sulfur oxides and other pollutants to the upper reaches of the atmosphere. Some substances, such as the fluorocarbons from aerosol sprays, do keep rising, perhaps to endanger the ozone layer. But most particles and gases are eventually washed down by the rain. By that time, the sulfur and nitrogen oxides, through a series of complex chemical processes, have been transformed into sulfuric and nitric acids. They come down where they happen to come down. By the mid-1950s, air pollution in England became so bad that planes often had a hard time landing at Heathrow Airport. Building the smokestacks higher resulted in a considerable clearing of the British air, but exacerbated the acid-rain problems of Scandinavia and Western Europe. The question we must ask is will people be willing to install expensive scrubbers, electrostatic precipitators, and other antipollution devices to prevent pollution in other, distant places?

Right now, Canada's Ontario Hydro is planning to build an 800-megawatt, coal-fueled power plant only 45 miles north of Minnesota's Superior National Forest, including the Boundary Waters Canoe area. This region, with its thousands of lakes, is officially protected by Congress from any serious deterioration in its air quality. But the congressional restraining order may be as futile as King Canute forbidding the tide to come in, for the new Atikokan plant does not plan to install scrubbers in its high-rise smokestacks to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions—though it is supposed to burn low-sulfur coal mined in Canada. The U.S. State Department and the Environmental Protection Agency are pondering what, if anything, they should ask Canada to do about it.

THE ACIDITY of any liquid is measured by its pH number, on a scale from 1 to 14. A pH of 7 is neutral. A rising pH number means increasing alkalinity (saturated lime has a pH of 12.3), while a lower pH means higher acidity (pure sulfuric acid is 1.2). Important to remember is that a drop of one pH unit—say, from 6 to 5—indicates a *tenfold* increase in acidity; from 6 to 4 would be a hundredfold jump; from 6 to 3 a thousandfold. It should also be emphasized that "pure" rainwater is not neutral, but slightly acidic, with a pH of about 5.6 or 5.7. This is because the water combines with carbon dioxide (the "exhalations" of green plants) to form a weak carbonic acid—which is a highly buffered solution, making the rain highly resistant to any further lowering of its pH. Some of the acids in the atmosphere would be there even without any human activity; they come from volcanic eruptions, from forest fires, from various biological processes such as the action of bacteria on swamps. But the rain's buffering capacity would probably enable it to handle these natural contaminants. The overload, though, comes from the burning of our oil, coal, natural gas, and gasoline; these extra millions of tons of sulfur and nitrogen oxides (among other pollutants) are more than rain clouds can hold up against.

Acid rain has long been recognized as a serious problem in Norway and Sweden, whose mountainous soils—like those of the Adirondacks—are unable to neutralize acids. For a long time acid rain in the United States was perceived as being confined to the Northeast, where many lakes have a pH of below 5—low enough to kill off fish. The average pH of rain in the Northeast has gone down to 4.1 over the last 25 to 30 years, representing a fortyfold increase in acidity. (Western Europe is roughly in the same fix.) In some especially acidic rains, both here and in Scandinavia, the pH has gone below 3. Environmentalists have recently realized that virtually all rainfall east of the Mississippi River has for some time been below the normal 5.6. Moreover, a survey in southern California showed that the mean pH of the rainfall in Pasadena for 1976 and 1977 was 3.9!

Such new revelations have spurred scientists to start organizing a nationwide acid-rain monitoring network. Among those cooperating will be the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Geological Survey. Some 40 stations are already in operation, and another 60 are scheduled to be functioning by 1982. They will coordinate their findings with stations in Canada and Europe. Meanwhile, the Scandinavian countries have been agitating for years to establish a global network—since acid rain is undoubtedly a global problem—and the United Nations has begun to take some steps in that direction. The idea is that if people understand that their pollutants are falling as acid

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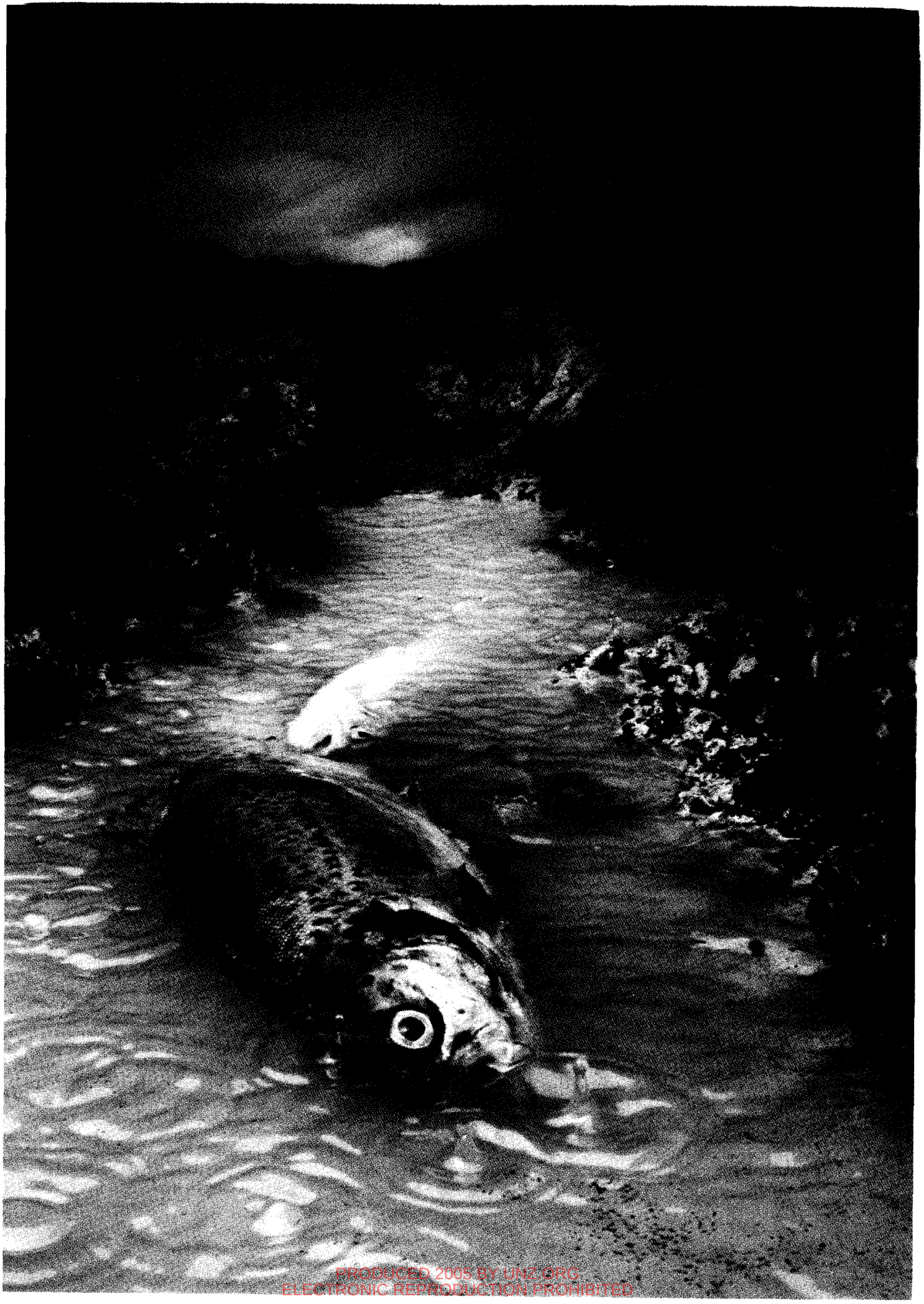

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Ironically, the increased acid-rain problem in many parts of the country is the direct result of antipollution measures in other areas.

rain on someone else, someone else's pollutants are falling as acid rain on them; so we had all better start cleaning up.

THE SERIOUSNESS of the acid-rain problem is still neither fully appreciated nor universally accepted. It is also true that much of the damage acid rain is alleged to have caused is based on minimal evidence. Let's examine what we know for sure.

Not really in dispute are the fish that have been killed. In many parts of Norway and Sweden, valuable trout and salmon runs have been wiped out. Canadian studies have revealed how the fish populations of so many streams and lakes have been destroyed: The acid seldom kills fish directly; it mainly affects their procreative capacity so that the next generation simply fails to be born.

High acidity in the water lowers calcium levels in a prospective-mother fish to a point where she cannot produce eggs. Even when she does, both the eggs and freshly hatched larvae are especially vulnerable to acid. Adult fish, too, are so stressed by it that their biochemistry is altered. In lakes where there is year-round acidity, the stress is chronic and debilitating. When the spring thaws set in, acids that have accumulated in the melting snow are released in sudden intensive bursts, causing the already-stressed fish to die in large numbers.

Some lakes are like war-ravaged villages where only the very young, the very old, and the very ill are left—and they are all particularly susceptible to further increments of acidity. Before long the fish population in the lake has fallen to zero. Though some species of fish succumb sooner than others, even the more resistant varieties are affected when the pH goes below 5. The Cornell group is actively working at developing strains of acid-resistant fish as one means of replenishing the depleted Adirondack lakes while waiting for the world beyond the Adirondacks to stop sending up pollutants for the rain to wash down.

There is less substantial evidence in regard to plants, farm crops, and forest lands. Experiments at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, N.Y., have shown that brown spots (evidence of cell death) begin to appear on the leaves of some plants when the rainwater reaches a pH of 3.1. But it stands to reason that even at lower levels of acidity (higher pH) more subtle kinds of damage can occur. Observations here and abroad suggest that the growth of many agricultural crops and forest lands has slowed significantly over recent years, an outcome often attributed to an increase in acid rain, though the connection remains to be proved. Some scientists believe that young plants are especially vulnerable. Just as there are critical periods in human fetal development when a drug like thalidomide or a virus like rubella can cause birth defects, so in a developing seedling can the presence of excess acid at crucial points interfere—sometimes disastrously—with normal growth.

As for acid rain's effects on man-made structures, it clearly accelerates the erosion of metal, painted wood, and various kinds of stone. Cornell's Gene Likens has photographs showing sandstone sculptures in Germany, which, though erected in 1702, showed no noticeable deterioration by 1908. By 1969, however, the erosion was substantial and worrisome. The same is true of buildings, monuments, and outdoor artworks the world over. Geologist K. Lal Gauri, of the University of Louisville, an expert in the restoration of stone, warns that structures like the Parthenon, the Colosseum, and the Taj Mahal—already in various stages of decay—may disintegrate unless something is done to reverse the awful ravages of pollution.

Seldom sufficiently considered are some of the side effects of acid rain. For instance, Cornell's Carl Schofield was puzzled to find heavy trout mortality occurring in lakes whose acidity was much too low to account for what was happening. He and his colleagues, sleuthing the mystery, discovered that the reaction between the rain-borne nitric acid and the soil can set in motion a "second wave of destruction": the release of large quantities of aluminum into lakes and streams. "Because the poisoned runoff moves rapidly across the tops of the lakes in a relatively solid mass," Schofield explained, "fish can sometimes find refuge at the bottom of deeper lakes with a good oxygen supply. But in the shallower lakes the fish are caught in a deadly trap. They have the choice of dying from lack of oxygen at the bottom or from acids and aluminum at the top."

Or take the case of the spotted salamander, another Adirondack creature believed to be endangered by the acid rains. The salamander's diet consists of insect larvae, notably those of mosquitoes and midges; it in turn serves as food for other predators, such as birds, shrews, and foxes. If the spotted salamander were to vanish from a given area, we might witness a population explosion of mosquitoes and midges, with an accompanying diminution of those species that in turn, rely on the salamander as a major source of their food.

And as we talk about acid rain, we must not forget to ask: What else is coming down in the rain? Many scientists are not forgetting to ask, but they are not finding too many definitive answers. A host of pollutants is present in the atmosphere—particularly small quantities of tin, arsenic, lead, and mercury—and many are suspected of being washed down by the rain. Researchers at Colorado State University and the University of South Florida recently detected in rainfall for the first time minute amounts of methyltin compounds which can, under certain conditions, be converted into even more toxic substances such as methylmercury. Scientists at the University of Georgia's Institute of Ecology, worried about the decline of the North American river otter, suspect environmental pollutants. They found in the otter alarmingly high concentrations of mercury which, they theorize, goes up with the burning of coal and comes down with the falling of rain.

WHAT DOES all this betide for human health? Most environmental-health scientists believe the pollutants we breathe in are more likely to harm us than those that rain down upon us. But even considering acidity alone, what *are* the effects of acid rain on human skin and hair? How low a pH level, and over what periods of exposure, is likely to be damaging? At what point does it make sense to start taking personal precautions? The questions are too new for dermatologists to have any ready answers. At this point, I think it would be foolish to panic at being caught in the rain. Just the same, if I were to wake up exuberant one rainy morning and feel an irresistible urge to do a long drawn-out singin'-in-the-rain number, à la Gene Kelly, in the driving downpour, I think I'd feel easier doing it with an umbrella. ◉

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Growing up Dogmatic: Conversations in a Cuban Classroom

by Jonathan Kozol

In 1976 and 1977, Jonathan Kozol, a Boston-based writer on the problems of education, visited Cuba to study its school system firsthand. The following article about his stay at the Martyrs of Kent Junior High School, en campo*—out in farm country—is drawn from Kozol's forthcoming book,* Children of the Revolution: A Yankee Teacher in the Cuban Schools, *to be published next month by Delacorte.*

This morning, as my driver and I head out to the country, the soil is rich-looking and very, very red. The sugarcane rises high over our heads on either side. One approaches the school through a neighborhood of flat fields, interrupted by occasional hills. Orchards, cornfields, citrus groves, and palm trees are on both sides of the road. A number of small houses have, in their front yard, only a single cow.

At last, after about an hour's travel directly west out of Havana, we enter the driveway of Martyrs of Kent School—which, I later learn, is named for the four students who were shot dead at Kent State University in 1970, the year this school was completed and dedicated.

As we speed up the drive, I notice that, very much like other Cuban schools that I have visited, Martyrs of Kent consists of three connected buildings, multiple zigzag stairways, breezeways, corridors, and such. Unlike those brand new schools, which are the pride of José Ramón Fernández, Cuban Minister of Education, Martyrs of Kent is not a showplace adorned with red, blue, and purple circles, stripes and banners, slogans. It has no beautiful gardens, no decorative pool before its doorway, no Olympic pool in which kids and teachers can enjoy an evening swim. Its concrete slabs are of a pink-gray color. Its windows are thin wooden slats tinted blue. In four directions outward from the central complex stretch fields of beets and sugarcane and large, long stretches of banana trees.

As I have elsewhere, I start out by visiting classrooms chosen, by my wish, at the last minute—and at random. One is a physics class. A strict-looking young man is explaining something about levers. There is a complicated-looking formula on the blackboard. On the back wall I see a striking poster in Spanish bearing the legend, "Against the Neutron Bomb!" Another poster echoes a fairly recent protest-demonstration at Kent State: "STOP THE GYM! DON'T TRY TO COVER HISTORY WITH CEMENT!"

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Proceeding from room to room, I come upon an exuberant English class, conducted by an energetic—and extremely competent and engaging—woman teacher. A pleasant breeze blows through the open wood slats of the windows, as English conversation goes on nonstop, teachers and students tossing the dialogue back and forth:

"Mary is a student."

"Miriam is an engineer."

"Paul is a teacher."

"Peter is an actor."

"Is Miriam an actress?"

"No! Miriam is an engineer!"

When a student speaks with insufficient clarity, the teacher races forward to inquire: "Pardon me?"

A student who gets the words all wrong receives an English schoolmarm's teasing: "Oh! No, no, my dear!"

When the teacher wants full-class participation, she invites them with a pleasant phrase: "Let's go!"

The answer from one of the students isn't quite right or wrong. She makes an amusing, puzzled face, and says: "So-so!"

At last the students start to get in the swing of the lesson. "Very good! Keep on! Let's go!"

I go into the well-stocked, peaceful, and relaxing library, and I'm impressed by the range of titles in both Spanish and English. I note down a few. (Titles given are as they appear on the books and may differ from actual titles.) *War and Peace*, Tolstoy (15 copies); *Fathers and Sons*, Turgenev (15 copies); *The Three Musketeers*, Dumas (18 copies); *An American Tragedy*, Dreiser (17 copies); *The Story of My Life*, Charles Chaplin (7 copies); *Claude Debussy: Biography* (10 copies); *Friedrich Engels: Biography* (10 copies); *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, Jules Verne (12 copies); *Tom Sawyer*, Mark Twain (20 copies); *Swiss Family Robinson*, Wyss (10 copies); *Just So Stories for Little Children*, Kipling (15 copies); *Journey of a Naturalist*, Darwin (15 copies); *Shorter Writings of Karl Marx* (15 copies); *Ten Days that Shook the World*, John Reed (7 copies); *David Copperfield*, Charles Dickens (20 copies); *Oliver Twist*, Charles Dickens (20 copies); *Selected Works*, Euripides, Homer, Aristophanes (10 copies each); *Man's Fate*, Malraux (15 copies); *The Red and the Black*, Stendhal (20 copies); *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, Goethe (15 copies); *Tobacco Road*, Erskine Caldwell (15 copies); *Tales of Hoffman, An Anthology* (10 copies); *Buddenbrooks*, Thomas Mann (10 copies); *Selected Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (10 copies); *In the Struggle*, "La Pasionaria" (15 copies); *Les Miserables*, Victor Hugo (15 copies)....

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"You would be welcome to come back and talk with us some more. It isn't bad, you know, to disagree."

How does all this differ from the library that one might find in any good school in New England or in San Francisco? Except for Engels, Marx, and maybe Chaplin or Reed, I cannot imagine that it would be very different.

Next I sit in a comfortable conference room and talk in English—with occasional aid from a translator—with a half-dozen pupils, who, with one exception, are fourteen or fifteen years of age and who are all in the ninth grade. Marisella is fourteen: tall and slender, somewhat British in appearance, with her long blond hair combed straight and parted in the middle. She begins, at my request, to tell me all the details of her academic schedule. Every pupil in the ninth grade, she explains, must take ten mandatory subjects: Math, Spanish, English, History, Geography, Chemistry, Physics, Labor Education, Physical Education, Fundamentals of Political Knowledge.

Mario is thirteen years old, but already in the ninth grade, and quite fluent in English. Very small, with curly hair, he seems to be adored by all the rest. I ask him to run down some of the classes in more detail. "In Labor Education," he replies, "we learn to work with tools of every kind. This year we are working with machine tools—and primarily with metal. Last year, we had practice with the same tools, but we worked only with wood. The purpose is not to train us as *obreros* (factory workers)—although it may well be that some of us will choose that as the work of our career. The real purpose is that when we are grown up, we will know exactly how to do that kind of work, and we will have respect for those who do it as their livelihood as well."

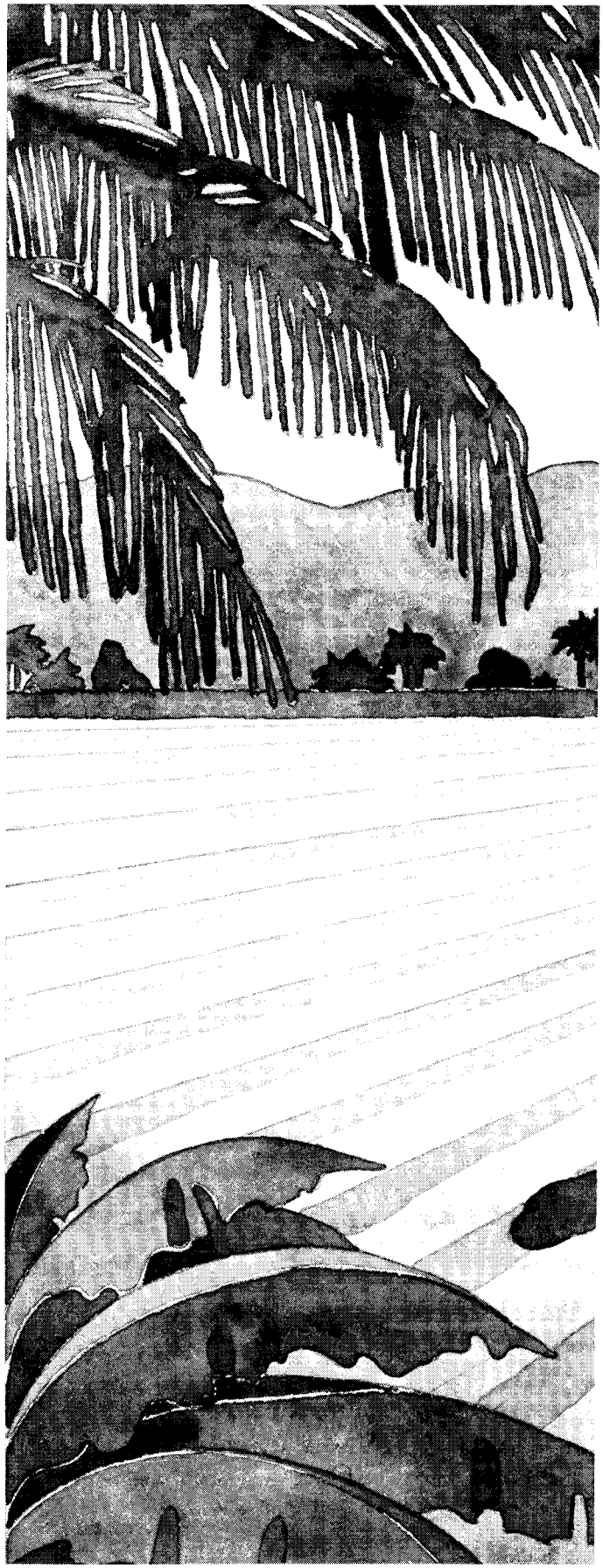
I ask him what he hopes to do, himself, when he grows up. He says that he would like to be an engineer. Marisella says the same. Two other girls, Emilia and Barbara, also plan to work as engineers. (I have the impression, somewhat familiar from my own experience in teaching school, that "engineer" has somehow come to be contagious in the group this week. If I went back in December, I would not be startled to discover that they all intended to be botanists or architects instead.) One student only, out of the full group—a vibrant, politically ferocious, rather hefty girl named Sandra—tells me she intends to work "within the political cadres of the military." Traditional sex roles have, for the women of this school, pretty well gone by the board.

Sandra fills me in on several other points about curriculum: "We start organic chemistry this year. That stuff is hard. ... In history, we are looking at the course of World War II."

Intrigued, I ask her how she sizes up that war's basic issues and its various alliances. She gives me a pretty much unyielding picture of the way it was: "It was the fascist side against the socialists and capitalists together. The fascist side was Mussolini and Hitler. [She does not mention Japan.] The allies were the U.S.S.R.—they were most important of all antifascist forces in the war—and, also, Britain, Poland, France ... and the United States." She adds: "The Soviet Union made the greatest sacrifice in lives. The U.S. joined the war but also made enormous profit. A lot of people in the U.S.A. made an awful lot of money from the war."

I interrupt to ask about Hitler and receive from Mario this brief assessment: "Hitler was a racist—but his racism was capricious. He hated dark-haired people with dark eyes and all; yet he was, himself, a little man with black hair with no blue eyes at all. He was *not* one of his own blond gods!"

Every time that Mario speaks, I'm struck by the excellence



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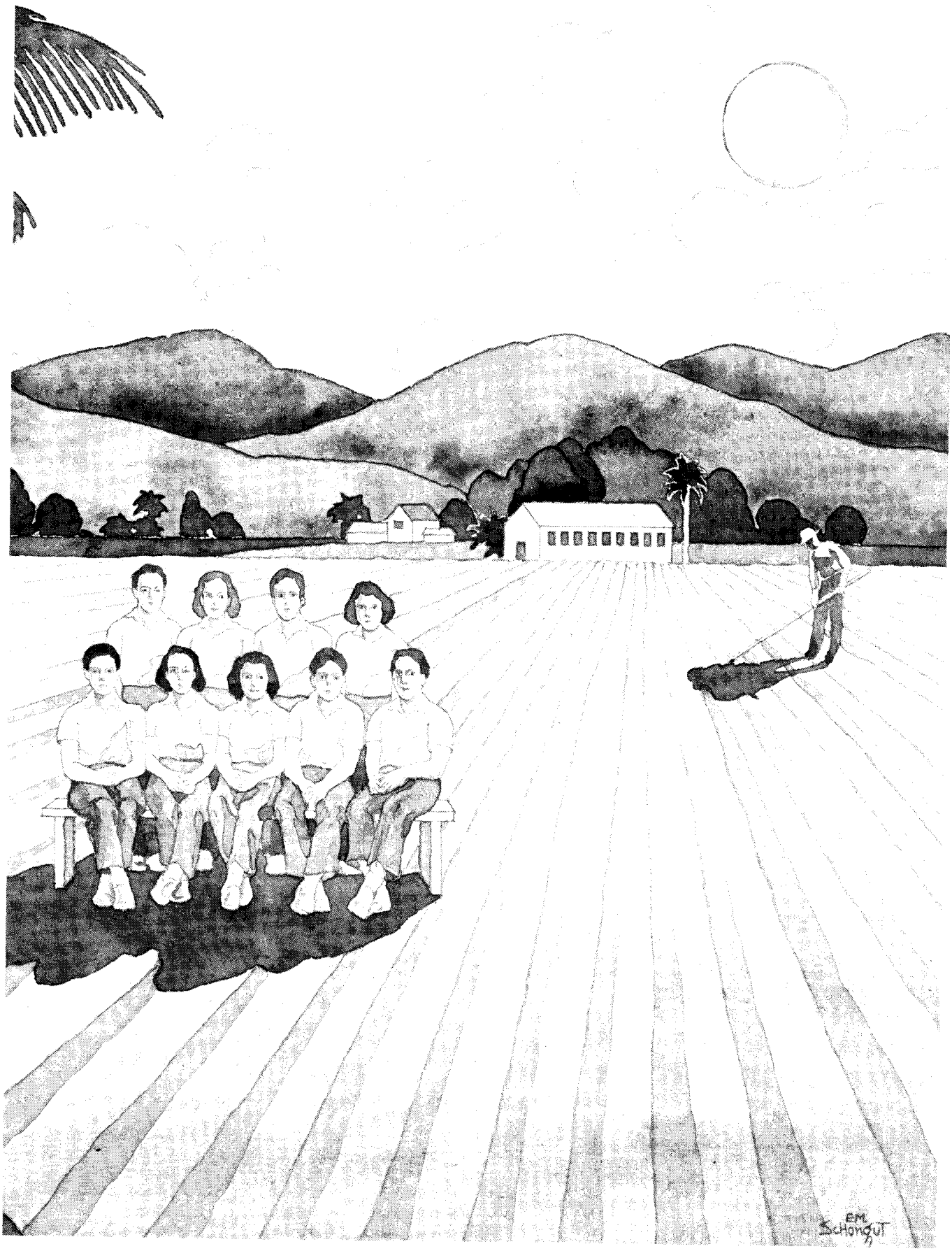

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of his English vocabulary. I look at him now with slight surprise: "Did you just say 'capricious'?"

"Hitler *was* capricious," he replies.

I swallow my thoughts about this—and proceed to ask about the course on "Fundamentals...."

Again, Mario, the sole boy in the group, sitting by my side, jumps right in and rattles off the subject matter in an easy manner, buzzing like a bee right in my ear: "Marx, Engels, Lenin, Hegel....This is the basic reading matter for the year."

I ask about their reading in Hegel, since that philosopher sounds more than a little difficult for junior high. Sandra bounces back unhesitatingly, "We don't read *all* that Hegel wrote! Don't be absurd! We just read excerpts."

"How do you feel about the parts of Hegel that you know?"

Sandra: "Hegel was against the capitalist system—but in my belief, for the wrong reasons."

After this brisk summary of Hegel, I try to step back for a moment into less ambitious subject matter. I ask if somebody else would like to give me a quick rundown on the daily schedule. "Not Sandra or Mario," I say. "Somebody else!"

Emilia—seemingly shy until this time, a serious-looking girl with dark black bangs—diffidently takes up the burden. She runs down the schedule with machine-gun speed: "We're up at 6:00, do wake-up exercises, clean our rooms, and have breakfast at 7:00. After breakfast, there's a brief assembly outside where we hear the news and lots of interesting things. We go to class at 7:20 if we're in the seventh grade or ninth. (Eighth-graders work in the nearby fields in the morning—their schedule is the same, but just the other way around.) After we attend five classes, we have lunch around 12:30, but we get one break at 10:15 for sweets and for soft drinks. The dining hall closes at 12:45. Then we go to the fields. We don't march! *Please do not say that we march*. But we do line up (in rows). Teachers go with us, but our guides in the fields are older women from the farms close to school."

I ask them what they grow. Emilia resumes, saying, "Mainly beets... also bananas... but we grow crops in rotation now, so that the land will be in use. Therefore, we plant potatoes too. The *campesinas* do the planting of the banana trees—to show us how. It is a delicate job. We do the work of stripping off the leaves, but not the planting of the trees."

The fine distinction puzzles me. I ask what I consider an innocent question: "Why can't students do the planting also?—and am instantly shot down. The redoubtable Sandra lets me have it in no uncertain terms: "Listen! This is an important crop for export! It isn't something to play with. It's for real. We expect a good crop this year, both for use at home and export. We export to many different nations, as you ought to know by now."

Emilia finishes ticking off the schedule of the day, and thereby gets me off the hook: "At 4:30, we come back and bathe. At 5:30, we line up to go to quiet study. Twice a week, it's individual study. Three times a week, we work in teams so we can help each other. Supper is at 7:30, then free time for recreation, meetings, and those things. At 10:00 we go back to our dorms to wash and then we go to sleep." I ask if they got sufficient sleep. Mario promptly retorts, "It has been foreseen that this is exactly the amount of sleep we need."

Growing more and more accustomed to his quite astonishing vocabulary, I notice the hour, and I try to press ahead with three last questions that are on my mind. I ask if they will define the meaning of "freedom" in the terms they find correct. Sandra shoots right back with one of her no-nonsense definitions: "Freedom means—when you are free from international capitalistic exploitation!"

Recoiling a bit, I try to put in a plug for freedom of speech. At first, only one student, Barbara, who has been almost entirely silent up to now, concedes I have a point: "Freedom of speech is going to be important if you want to try to build up solidarity among the people in a land that is oppressed."

She adds, however: "Guns are quicker, though."

Sandra, oddly more conciliatory now, all at once surprises me by agreeing with my point of view: "In order to build up solidarity, the people need to share their views. So they *do* need, of course, to have free speech."

When I ask what seems to be the crucial question, though, I run right into a stone wall: "Do you have free speech in Cuba now?"

"We don't perceive that as a useful question," Mario replies. "In our society, we are *already* free from exploitation now."

He speaks to me in didactic terms, as if I were (and as I *am*, in his view) a slow learner: "After the Spanish war was nearly won [by Cuba], the U.S. sent the battleship *Maine*, then blew it up as a pretext to attack the Spaniards and to come into the war. We had been warned of intervention of this kind. José Martí wrote, twenty years before, that this would be the sequence of events."

Barbara: "There was treachery by the rulers of the U.S.A. Soon they started exploitation of our people—indirectly."

"First indirect—then *direct*!" says Sandra. "The U.S. corporations took our land. Machado, San Martín, Batista . . . they were puppets for the U.S.A."

The students now try to make clear to me what the former exploitation in Angola was like. I recognize what is their earnest effort to instruct me about something (i.e., exploitation) which, because I press the other point about freedom, they are convinced I do not understand.

The next question I raise concerns the differential, which still exists in Cuba between salaries for workers and those salaries that are granted to professionals, like doctors. I give them the example of an average Cuban worker, who is infinitely better off, of course, than he has ever been before (apart from everything else, because at last he really *does* have work). But nonetheless, I point out, his monthly earnings are 140 pesos (175 U.S. dollars). On the other hand, a Cuban doctor earns between 600 and 900 pesos in a month. "Why should some folks get so much—and poor folks so much less?"

Sandra neatly aims and shoots me down once more—as if I were a C-47 circling the sky above the school: "We don't *have* poor people in Cuba, as you know quite well; so your question isn't stated very well. If you think those workers in our factories are poor, then you can't even *dream* what poverty was like."

I tell her she is right. "My words were careless, but you still don't seem to have the nerve to deal with the real point."

"What *is* it?" she asks, as if she barely can put up with me by now.

"Workers earn 140 pesos. Doctors earn at least 600 pesos. The difference seems too great."

She thinks about it—and, once again to my surprise, agrees: "I have to admit it....I think you're right. They both work hard. The difference is too great. As history advances, we'll reduce that disproportion. Someday, everyone who works as hard as possible should get the same."

Marisella bites her lip, looks hard into the air, then says: "I

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don't agree. The doctor has studied longer. What he does contributes more. I don't believe a factory worker deserves the same."

They argue back and forth about this issue. It is soon apparent that the gulf separating them is profound. (I wonder that they have not spoken of this point before.) It is now well past 12:00. I realize that I soon will have to go.

I try to wind things up with a traditional, if rather soporific, question: "Would you like to send along suggestions for those students who are just about your age in the United States?"

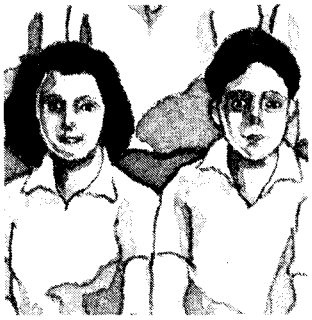
Everyone looks at someone else. It is as if they need to settle on a common point of view. There is a kind of "huddle," and then Mario replies: "Tell them, please, that we support them in their fight against the rulers—whoever they are—the corporations or the C.I.A. We do not suggest, however, that they think about the use of weapons. They cannot use weapons because of their situation and their age. We would advise them first to read more books about important struggles like Moncada. We would advise them to read speeches of Fidel and also, of course, to read the works of Che [Guevara].... We would advise them also to read books by Marx and Engels...."

Mario goes on with his selective reading list. It is a list that would not be bizarre to U.S. students, maybe three or four years older, if this were a decade back.

When he is finished, I check their ages and the spelling of their names one final time. Sandra says: "I bet that you won't have a hard time to remember mine!" Then, in a more quiet voice: "It's just the same as Sandra Scheuer. She was killed during the shooting at Kent State ...." She shakes my hand and squeezes it so hard I am afraid it will fall off. Mario also shakes my hand, as do the others. In an awkward moment of good-bye, Sandra tousles Mario's hair, and everybody smiles. The group reminds me of a little team. It was their "huddle" that brought that thought to mind.

Sandra says: "You would be welcome to come back and talk with us some more. It isn't bad, you know, to disagree."

I take Sandra at her word and come back Monday morning. Again, I find, we disagree profoundly on a dozen different points of politics and tactics and ideals. Beneath it all, however, there is a warm and intimate feeling. The dialogue between us has developed into a strong and lasting bond. As we sit together that day, in our final conversation ("How will we keep in touch?" "Where should we write?"), I find that I am scribbling down within my mind some of the points that seem to me most important. I tell myself that I must not forget the whole idea of "obligation *in* (not *to*) the revolution," which these children constantly bespeak—more in this second session than in the first.



Thinking back on my experiences in Cuba, I find that certain impressions are still vivid in my mind. For example, pupils in Cuba, unlike those in almost any land I know, seem to find it natural to speak about their role, position, obligation, contribution, not *to* the government but *in* the revolution. (*Revolution*, it appears, has come to be almost a synonym for *state*. It is not regarded as a hardened entity, divorced from the participation of the youngest people in the land. It is perceived, rather, as a constant, self-correcting, and on-going process, one in which all citizens are expected to assume an active role.)

I asked the children once what "history" meant to them. "History is what we do today to change the things we spoke about the day before." It was an answer I had seldom heard in Canada or in the U.S.A. (For most of us, historic matters have to do with other people or take place in earlier times—*never where we may be and while we are alive*.) Cuban children are, of course, like ours, indoctrinated in a thousand ways that I would like to challenge, modify, confront. But one redeeming feature of the highest order, in my own belief, is the capacity of any government to give its children an exhilarating sense of possible participation in the shaping of the world in which they live. Children who grow up, not as objects of historic process but rather as potential subjects of historic change, are hard to find in Moscow *or* New York.

It is a priceless gift to grow up with the sense that one may sensibly, not psychopathically, presume to think that he or she can be part of any process that may change the world.

I think light years of distance divide the concept of "obedience to the state that we respect or fear" from all that is connoted by the Cuban-style sense of obligation "in" a permanent process in which every man and woman has a role.

I noted also the idea of freedom as economic liberation and the consequent opportunity to eat and sleep and work without despair. Other freedoms, of the kind held highest by those, like myself, who have grown up in a very different social order, did not appear to be distasteful or even undesirable. They simply seemed to be "hard to imagine."

There is a third point that I felt it was essential to recall. This was the fact that Martyrs of Kent is not unique, but one of several hundred junior high schools of this kind, all constructed some time since the spring of 1970, 600 at the time I was in Cuba, 400 more in planning stages or in actual construction. Of all of these schools, I had selected the oldest and the first as both the symbol and pacesetter for the rest. It was also, of course, the name itself that drew me back again to this school, more than to any other of the 25 or 30 Cuban schools that I had come to know during two visits that I made, first in the fall of 1976 and then again during the subsequent September.

When I left the school, on a hot day in early autumn of last year, Sandra asked me how soon I would be going home. I told her that I would be leaving in two days. In 48 hours, I would land at Montreal; then it would be only about an hour more before I saw my family once again.

"Montreal!" she said, as if with genuine alarm. "How many hours does that plane trip take?"

"Almost five hours," I said.

"Five hours!" She looked up in the sky. "You're taking a long ride...."

Something was different all at once: something like the changes in the air before a storm. I asked one question. "Would you like me to take home a message to the mothers and the fathers of the students who were killed out on the hillside at Kent State?"

Sandra answered—and her voice was startlingly soft. "Tell them," she said, "that we remember . . . that we always will remember . . . that we are sorry for their suffering . . . that we will always be beside them in their pain."

After a pause, she swallowed hard to speak these words: "And tell them, please, we send our love."

I told her that I would keep my promise. We all went out to the front steps of the school. The group of us, somehow, after two days of debate, had come to be close friends. As the car drove off, I studied those children for a moment. I tried to memorize the face of each one. It was hard to convince myself that this was the last good-bye. ◉

Jonathan Kozol won a National Book Award for his book Death at an Early Age.

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DIGGING CITIES

Archaeology Hits the Streets

by Norman Schreiber

THE METROPOLITAN Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) is constructing a subway that will transect the city. Tiptoeing between the frontloaders and backhoes is an archaeological team led by Professor Roy Dickens of Georgia State University. A parking lot at Denver's McNichols Sports Arena became the object of archaeological study when 19th-century bottles were found by men working on a sewer project. In downtown Kingston, N.Y., Sarah Bridges, an NYU student working for the Kingston Historic Landmark Commission, came across remnants of a stockade built in 1658 by Peter Stuyvesant. Professor Dena Dincauze, now of Amherst College in Massachusetts, proved in an archaeological survey of the Boston area that beneath the city streets lie a number of sites worthy of excavation. For urban archaeologists there probably will be no legendary lost cities, precious metals, or radiant jewels. There will be old bottles, building foundations, and toys. Together these artifacts have a tremendous value. Properly interpreted they provide new information about our past.

Until a few years ago, most archaeologists in this country ignored the cities in which they lived. There were two reasons for this, according to New York University's Professor Burt Salwen, a leading archaeologist who in 1970 wrote an influential paper urging his colleagues to take a look at the urban environment around them.

"First of all," Professor Salwen explained, "archaeologists were trained to work with simpler prehistoric or early classic societies. Second, they thought the city was so disturbed and so screwed up that there wasn't going to be anything left.

"Archaeologists, on the whole, began to look at cities partly because they couldn't get grants to travel to distant places or they got kicked out of India or wherever they were doing their research."

As new a discipline as it is, urban archaeology is nevertheless already yielding impressive results. In Philadelphia, near Independence Hall, archaeologists unearthed the original foundation of Benjamin Franklin's home. In Bedford Stuyvesant, in Brooklyn, N.Y., archaeologists have helped restore houses in the historic Weeksville district. Visitors to downtown Annapolis, Md., can walk in a garden that was once the domain of 18th-century Governor William Paca.

Then there are the artifacts. Atlanta alone has yielded hundreds of thousands of items—all of which are fascinating—chamber pots, metal cars from early train sets, dolls, pottery.

"The most exciting artifacts are those we found in groups," explained Professor Dickens. "Recently, we found a little refuse pit on the outskirts of Atlanta. Apparently, a local tavern dumped its garbage there in the 1880s. That trash contained a group of bottles all embossed with the name of the tavern, pieces of a countertop, and fancy things that would have been in a saloon of that period."

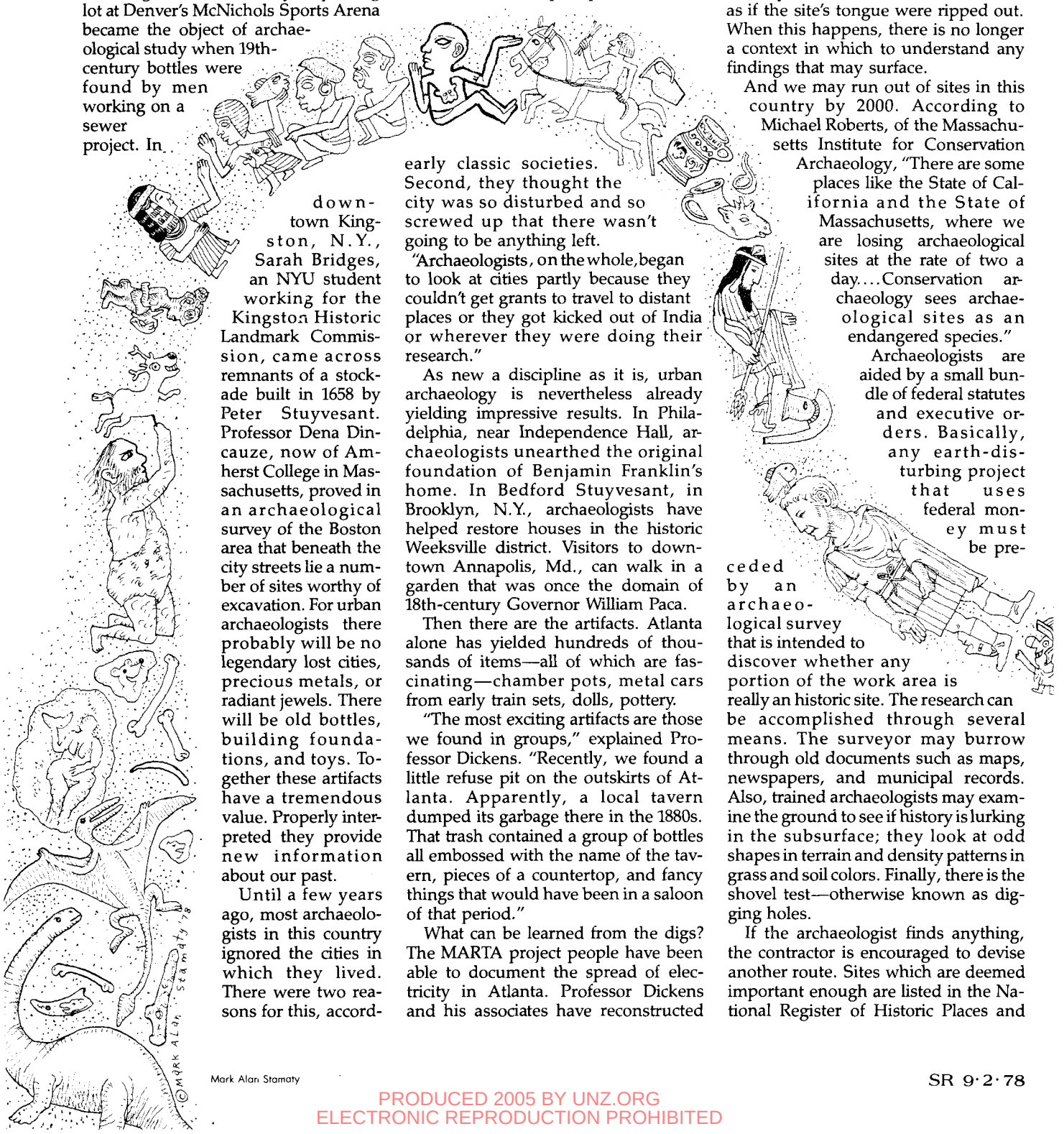
What can be learned from the digs? The MARTA project people have been able to document the spread of electricity in Atlanta. Professor Dickens and his associates have reconstructed life in Edgewood, a small Atlanta community, a history that nearly was lost. Archaeologists can literally unearth information about the essential nature of cities. Archaeology may prove to be a salvation for American cities—unless it is bulldozed by ignorance and politics.

Every time the earth is disturbed, it is as if the site's tongue were ripped out. When this happens, there is no longer a context in which to understand any findings that may surface.

And we may run out of sites in this country by 2000. According to Michael Roberts, of the Massachusetts Institute for Conservation Archaeology, "There are some places like the State of California and the State of Massachusetts, where we are losing archaeological sites at the rate of two a day....Conservation archaeology sees archaeological sites as an endangered species."

Archaeologists are aided by a small bundle of federal statutes and executive orders. Basically, any earth-disturbing project that uses federal money must be preceded by an archaeological survey that is intended to discover whether any portion of the work area is really an historic site. The research can be accomplished through several means. The surveyor may burrow through old documents such as maps, newspapers, and municipal records. Also, trained archaeologists may examine the ground to see if history is lurking in the subsurface; they look at odd shapes in terrain and density patterns in grass and soil colors. Finally, there is the shovel test—otherwise known as digging holes.

If the archaeologist finds anything, the contractor is encouraged to devise another route. Sites which are deemed important enough are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and



Mark Alan Stamaty

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placed in a "bank" to be excavated later. If there is no alternative location for the construction, however, an immediate salvation operation is necessary.

The Interagency Archaeological Service, a division of the Office of Archaeology and Historical Preservation (which comes under the umbrella of the Department of the Interior), can be thought of as an ombudsman for historic sites. According to IAS Director Lawrence Aten, "The IAS regulates the archaeological activities of nonfederal institutions on federal lands. We provide archaeological advice and assistance to anybody who wants it. We do feasibility studies and pilot studies to design new and better ways of doing cultural resource management.

"Another area of IAS concern pertains to situations in which surveys have already taken place. For example: A local community has an EPA grant to put in a new sewer line. Something is encountered; it turns out to be significant, but there's no way to avoid destroying the site by rerouting the sewer. The EPA can ask us to undertake salvage archaeology. If the salvage archaeologist says there is an impact on the environment, we will try to get the grant recipient to pay all of the costs involved in salvage. The principle is that the looter pays. In some cases, where costs constitute an unreasonable burden, we try to do the salvaging ourselves."

Obviously, there are those who see urban archaeology as something of an urban pest. For the cities, projects represent a way to get bucks, boost employment, deliver improved services, and appease community groups. Construction contractors, moreover, fear work delays may eat their budgets. The seemingly unpragmatic concerns of urban archaeology may seem naive if not downright detrimental.

What seem to be similarly skewed priorities in a San Francisco project have concerned urban archaeologists. The city has received a large grant for a major sewer project, which requires that a giant trench be gouged through Market Street and along the Embarcadero. Scientists familiar with the project question the manner in which the city has handled it.

"They wanted to go into construction immediately," said one observer. "They were anxious for the project to solve unemployment problems in the city, or so they said. The labor unions were coming out of the trees. It got very political. The city was just determined to barge on through with construction and not to delay for any environmental niceties." As a result, some information was lost forever.

Said Lawrence Aten, "There's a lot of difficulty in deciding what is an important property, what is a significant property, what should be in the National Register, and what steps should be taken to minimize damage."

Sometimes, however, the statutes work. On February 8, 1977, Bruce Rippeteau, state archaeologist for Colorado, drove to the site of the Denver sewer project. He jumped out of the van and took a careful look.

"I saw a huge trench," he said. "Three or four pieces of big equipment, all jockeying around the trench, were chewing through some sort of pavement or building foundation." He also saw fragments of brick and glass.

"I made a few phone calls," Rippeteau said, "to find out what state agency was really in charge of the project."

It turned out to be the EPA. Work was stopped for one day while Rippeteau, the EPA, and the construction company devised a plan under which their separate goals could be reached.

But ultimately, the urban archaeologist's greatest ally may not be the law. It may be the people in hard hats who are tearing up the earth in the first place. As workers, contractors, and engineers become more familiar with the concept of urban archaeology, they become more helpful. For example, when the rapid transit project in Atlanta was first begun, the construction people did not want to be bothered by the archaeologists. Now, it's not unusual for Professor Dickens to receive a phone call from a construction foreman telling him that he thinks they've run into something important.

"The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)," according to Professor Salwen, "passed a resolution saying that the ethical duty of an engineer is to consider historic resources when he starts to dig around. If he finds anything, he should stop and get in touch with somebody."

Salwen and other archaeologists feel that their science can unearth information that will be useful in solving urban problems. Right now, they are just beginning to gather the data.

"But how do you get that across to the guy whose bridge you're holding up?" Salwen wondered. "I'm not sure; perhaps by being rational and by being right. Data should be clear and the presentation of it should be sensible."

Urban archaeologists are having some success in combating the strip mining of our heritage. As they help us better understand our urban past they give us a better foundation on which to build an urban future. ◉

Norman Schreiber is a freelance writer living in New York City.

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Directrice Glorieuse

by Walter Terry

Paris

"I WORKED 14 months without a contract because they wouldn't give me what I asked for," says Violette Verdy, director of the Paris Opera Ballet. "But now I've signed. I got what I wanted." What Mme. Verdy wanted was autonomy for her company, a ballet budget not based on what is left over after opera productions have been paid for, a voice in both administration matters and union negotiations. During the battle, the usually smiling, always effervescent former ballerina even threatened to pull her Opera Ballet right out of the Palais Garnier (the popular name for the world's most sumptuous opera house, designed more than a century ago by Charles Garnier) if she did not have her way.

In 1976, Verdy ended her 20 years as a principal dancer with George Balanchine's New York City Ballet to return to her homeland. She "hung up her toe shoes" in order to become the first woman director of ballet in the 300-year history of the world's oldest dance company. She had been recommended for the job by Rolf Liebermann, administrator of the Théâtre National de l'Opéra, but said to me when she had accepted the position that she would be "directly responsible to the government of France."

"When I first arrived," she says today, "there was a state of war here. There were strikes, President Valery Giscard d'Estaing had threatened to close down the Opéra, and I, of course, was a suspicious character. I was torn at from every side, but I stayed in my saddle. I wasn't thrown. I knew what my direction must be. There is no war today, neither between the government and the administration nor between the artistic and administrative branches of the Opéra. So now I can go ahead with planning repertory, the schooling of our students, choreographic opportunities for creative young French dancers, mini-tours for units of our huge ballet company, international exchanges of stars and soloists, and hopefully, a tour in America in 1980!"

Mme. Verdy actually began her dancing career at the Opéra. Auditions had not been held during most of the war years, and at the end of World War II, there were 600 auditioners for the ballet school. Verdy was one of 35 selected. The 11-year-old Nelly Guillerm, as she was then known, remained one of "les petits rats" (as the child dancers at the Opéra are called) for only three months. In 1945, she was spotted and snapped up by Roland Petit to become the youngest dancer in the newly formed Ballets des Champs-Elysées. In 1949, at 14, she appeared in the title role of the French film, *Ballerina*, and from 1950 to 1956, she danced with Petit's Ballets de Paris (which he had founded in 1948), the troupe that introduced her to American audiences. Her success with the American public convinced her to stay. She danced as a star with the American Ballet Theatre for a year, and in 1958 began her long association with the New York City Ballet.

Thirty years after her brief stint as a "petit rat," Verdy returned as the boss. As Directrice de la Danse, she says the "contracts with the Opéra's previous ballet directors were one, possibly two, pages long. Mine is completely detailed so that if any questions about authority or jurisdiction should arise, I can simply point and say, 'There it is!' But I know, of course, that no matter what any contract says or what a battery of 26 lawyers decides, if you don't get on with people, you've got nothing."

Verdy is already combining her new authority, determinedly fought for in 14 months of negotiation, with her ability to get along easily with her colleagues, assistants, 142 or more dancers, and a houseful of students of all ages. The petite, blonde former ballerina (now becoming somewhat matronly—"Maman feeds me big suppers when I get home late at night, and it's French food at that!") is utterly charming but quietly tough, demanding but affectionate. She needs all of this to work in an ancient institution in which traditions—good and bad—are deeply rooted, one in which dancers are employees of the state, almost civil servants, almost impossible to discipline or fire.

"We have a statute," she told me, "that permits me to re-audition a dancer who is slipping. It is called a Control Exam, and it is for those we think need to be pushed or prodded or even kicked a little bit. Some of the young dancers, recently engaged, don't always comprehend what the profession is all about and how much work it takes to be a dancer—the daily classes, dieting when necessary, exhausting rehearsals. I think I have a right to put them up for the Control Exam and get rid of them if necessary.

"But you know, I'm very democratic in the American way and I brought this attitude, which is something strange here, to the old house. I had to be careful at first with the theater hierarchy and the traditional distance between those in command and the dancers. But I'm changing all that... slowly. They were not used to someone like me, in authority, trotting around and talking with the same respect both to a *quadrille*, the lowest class in our ballet ranks, and to a *première danseuse étoile*.

"I must have direct, no-protocol contact with my dancers. I have to make them realize that even if they are only *quadrille*, if they are in search of quality, of improving, of advancing, they will

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Violette Verdy—"Hung up her toe shoes to become the first woman director of the world's oldest ballet company."

receive the same concern I give a *premier danseur*." With this in mind, Verdy has begun a yearly competition at the Opéra open to all dancers who seek better roles, more money, higher rank, greater consideration. "I prefer incentive to punishment," says Verdy, who hopes to be able to use the Control Exam sparingly.

Further Verdy-established incentives come from the recent merging of the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique. Verdy is director of ballet at both the Salle Favart (as the Comique's home is popularly called) and the Palais Garnier, so she can move dancers from theater to theater according to requirements of repertory and roles. She encourages the choreographing of some small and even experimental ballets for the Favart to complement the spectacle-ballets demanded by the vast Garnier stage. Her dual position also enables her to assign dancers not cast in regularly scheduled ballets at either theater to her mini-groups, which tour the provinces, functioning rather like America's Joffrey II company or other junior units of major troupes. Thus junior soloists have the opportunity to dance leading roles and young choreographers, a chance to fulfill their creative desires.

Mme. Verdy allows the stars of the Paris Opera Ballet to make freelance guest appearances abroad, but she would prefer organized artistic exchanges on several levels. "If the dancer does a guest spot, he is squeezed like a tube of toothpaste. But I want more than squeezing. I want him to learn. It is my obligation to give my dancers broader horizons, so I'd like to make exchanges in which they remain for a while with another company and dancers from abroad come to us for a stay. I think this is more important for young soloists than for established stars. I'd love to do the same thing with our teachers."

The ballet school at the Opéra is run by Verdy's close friend, Claude Bessy, former ballerina (and for a very short time several years ago, acting director of the ballet). Bessy has reorganized the old school, increased both the number of classes and studios in use, and expanded the curriculum. Bessy, also very blonde and very handsome, is only a year older than Verdy, but she has been at the Opéra (from *petit rat* to *étoile*) all her life; although she is officially under Verdy, they are colleagues as well as sisterly confidantes. The third of the triumvirate of powerful ladies at the Opéra is red-haired Suzy Lefort, director of publicity and sister-in-law of Bernard Lefort, who is slated to succeed Liebermann as administrator of the Opéra in 1980. Verdy's contract is up for renewal that year, and although she smilingly refuses to make predictions, she sounds as if she expects to be around in 1981 when the 300th anniversary of the debut of Lafontaine, the world's first professional ballerina, is celebrated.

For now though, Mme. Verdy's vast administrative duties, planning conferences, and desk work never isolate her from the two things she loves best, dance and dancers. She keeps a sharp eye on the dazzling Patrick Dupond, who received the coveted Gold Medal (junior category) at the International Ballet Competition, in Varna, Bulgaria. "I am like his godmother," she says. "He has so much talent, I almost don't know where to start. But I must rein him in every once in a while. Olivier Patey is quite talented, too. His style is very classic, romantic. Patrick is much more virtuosic. But both are valuable, so I'm like a horse trainer—I hold Patrick back a little when he gets restless, and I push Olivier a little when he needs prodding."

Verdy herself has not given up dancing entirely. Each week she teaches two classes, one for boys, and another for girls. "I simply put down the phone, close the desk, tell my secretary to do the best she can, jump into my practice clothes, and head for the studio. If I didn't do that, I'd go stark raving mad. I love my job as director and all the challenges excite me, but do you know what I miss most? No, it's not performing or being a ballerina. I miss stretching my limbs into a good turnout position and I miss squeezing every muscle. I miss sweating!" Violette Verdy, Directrice de la Danse, Théâtre National de l'Opéra, has not forgotten the joys (and the sweat) of being a *petit rat*. Her love and concern are for the dancer, student or star. ◉

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THE MOVIES

One Feminist Film That Works

by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr.

A NUMBER OF films last season contemplated the plight of the single woman in Manhattan. *The Goodbye Girl* did so in the slick style of television situation comedy; it was intermittently entertaining but generally false. *An Unmarried Woman* was a good deal more honest but, for all its qualities, had its false stretches, such as the heroine's dependence on a collection of sad-sack women that one feels she could not have endured for a moment in real life. Now we have Claudia Weill's *Girlfriends*, and it rings true all the way.

The focus of *Girlfriends* is slightly different. Where the earlier films dealt with women in their thirties cast adrift by divorce, this one deals with a woman in her twenties trying to find her way in the world. And the angle of vision here is very different. In the earlier films, we saw the woman's predicament from the viewpoint of Neil Simon and Paul Mazursky, estimable fellows but of a different gender and age from their characters. In *Girlfriends* we see it from the viewpoint of a young filmmaker observing her own sex and generation.

Claudia Weill has previously won recognition for her documentaries—*The Other Half of the Sky: A China Memoir*, a film about China that she codirected with Shirley MacLaine; and *Joyce at 34*, about Joyce Chopra. She began making *Girlfriends* two years ago with a grant from the American Film Institute and completed it with grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. The film was received with applause at the festival in Cannes and has been rewarded with commercial distribution in the United States by Warner Bros.

Girlfriends is the story of Susan Weinblatt, a young woman, fresh from college, trying to make a living as a photographer. She is not conventionally attractive, rather a *jolie laide* with glasses and frizzy hair, a woman filled with aspiration and vulnerability. She is played sublimely by Melanie Mayron, whom some may remember as the hitchhiker in *Harry and Tonto*. Her roommate and best friend is Anne Munroe, blonde and pretty and hoping to become a writer. The main plot line is the record of Susan's reactions to the seasons of Anne's life—to her marriage, her pregnancy, her baby, her frustrations over losing her career, her abortion of a second pregnancy.

Susan feels betrayed when Anne chooses marriage and domesticity; Anne at times feels somewhat betrayed by marriage and domesticity. Living alone, Susan pursues her career, experiences gains and setbacks, sells three photographs to a magazine, but then must return to taking pictures at bar mitzvahs and weddings. For a moment she flirts with the idea of an affair with the rabbi who gives her these jobs. She takes in a woman hitchhiker who turns out to be a lesbian and is sent on her way; she has an irritated but loving relationship with a young man; she finally has an exhibition of her photographs. Anne does not appear at the opening; she has left her husband in a moment of anguish after her abortion. The two girls come together again, but, when Anne's husband arrives, she goes to him, and Susan is alone once more.

The portrait of young women poised between the desire for independence and achievement and the fear of loneliness is drawn with delicacy, humor, and truth. Claudia Weill has an exact sense of the subtle reserves and withdrawals in human relationships. Take a look, for example, at the scene in which Anne and her husband show Susan the photographs of their honeymoon. She also has a sharp eye and ear for the Manhattan world of loft parties, magazine offices, art galleries. Above all, she is economical. She knows when a scene has made its point, and she stops there. In this respect, Paul Mazursky has things to learn from her. *Girlfriends* is a rapid, sensitive, understated gem.

The acting is excellent throughout. In addition to the endearing Melanie Mayron, with her boots and floppy dresses, there are fine performances by Anita Skinner as the brittle and tremulous Anne, Bob Balaban as Anne's husband, Christopher Guest as Susan's boyfriend, and especially Eli Wallach in delicious form as the rabbi.

Girlfriends is the first fiction film to come easily and spontaneously—i.e., nonpolemically—out of the culture of women's liberation. Feminism operates as an assumption, not as an argument. *Girlfriends* is a delight in itself, and it is a splendid debut for a most gifted and promising young director. ◉

THOMAS ALVA EDISON INVENTING THE LIGHT BULB

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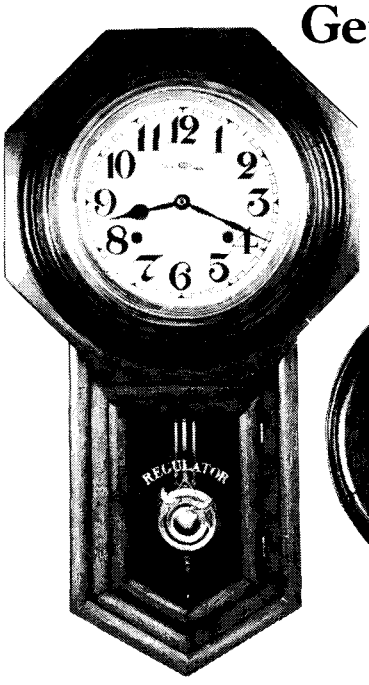

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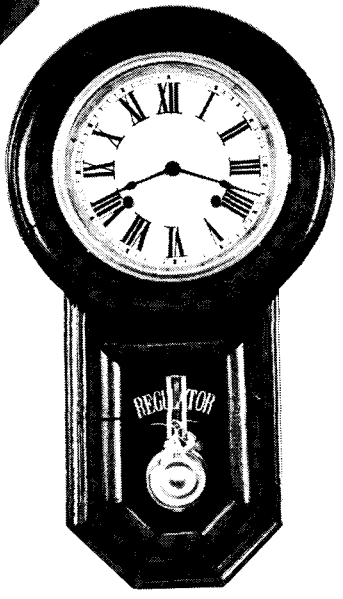

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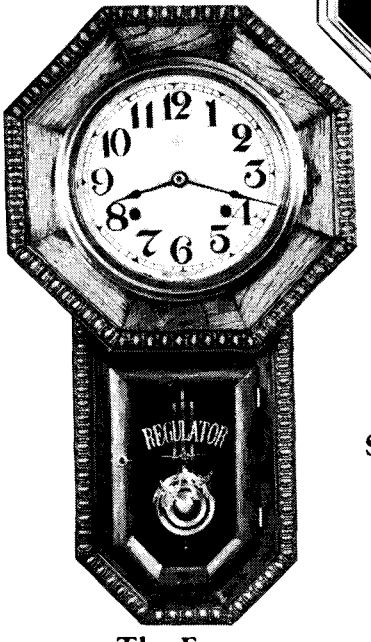

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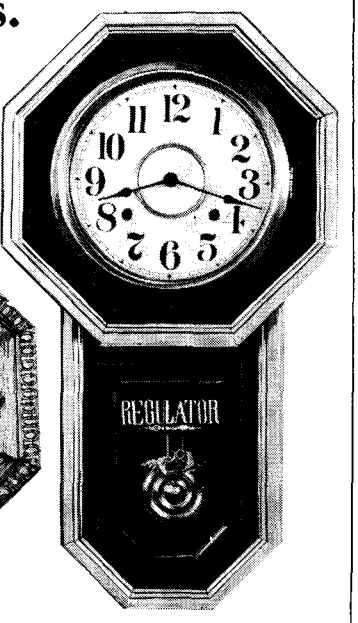

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THEATER

Risk-taking at the Guthrie

by Martin Gottfried

THE GUTHRIE Theater in Minneapolis is a product of the science age. It is not the usual regional theater, begun by a dedicated director and supported by the surrounding community. It was created (about 15 years ago) by a test-tube parent: the Ford Foundation. In those days, before the foundations decided that theater is trivial and unworthy of support, the Ford had a massive "humanities program." It decided that the Midwest needed a theater, and it belonged in geographically central Minneapolis. The foundation sponsored studies to show just where the audiences would come from and when. It decided what kind of theater it should be and what sort of plays it should present. It built the theater and provided seed money to support it.

The house that Ford built, then known as the Minnesota Theater Company, was modeled after Canada's prestigious Stratford Festival. It had Stratford's thrust stage (America's first); Stratford's founding director (Tyrone Guthrie); and it gave us good reason to hope for a second Ford Edsel—that the foundation's calculations would be defeated by human unpredictability. For what is theater, and what is art, if it can be researched and marketed?

The Minnesota Theater Company did stumble. Guthrie quit after three seasons and then had to be frantically recalled when the whole place looked as if it might go under. But it didn't. Michael Langham, who had succeeded Guthrie at Stratford, followed him to Minneapolis (after Guthrie had gotten the theater back on its feet) and established the place as the classiest stage institution in America. Minneapolis achieved what New York has never managed: a first-class repertory theater that presents the great dramas. One could still complain about Ford's cloning of a theater, but the work was good.

Now the Guthrie Theater has entered a new phase. After 12 years, Langham resigned and has been replaced by Alvin Epstein. This will prove no small change, for Langham ran the Guthrie on the British model: classically, conservatively, and elegantly. On the contrary, the Yale Repertory Theater, where Epstein was the associate director, does many new plays (the Guthrie almost never did) and when it does classics tends toward the radical among classics (the Guthrie held to the standard repertory). The Yale is also less concerned with spectacle and physical splendor than the Guthrie has been, and places less emphasis on classical acting technique. The Guthrie Theater seems bound to come down a step in opulence, in polish, and in class with Epstein, though it is likely to do more daring scripts—all of which Epstein's inaugural productions have indicated.

The new director's first season began with the American premiere of Henrik Ibsen's *The Pretenders*. The play would seem a mighty impressive choice—the first American production of this work. Upon seeing it, however, one could understand the basic, conceptual, and dramatic reason why *The Pretenders* was available for American premiere: It is unbearable. The play is not written in the kind of naturalistic style for which Ibsen is best known (*A Doll's House*, *Hedda Gabler*), but is rather an epic based on Norse lore, along the lines of his other early plays, such as *Peer Gynt*. I suspect it was a choice of occasion rather than merit.

What we have in *The Pretenders* is a 13th-century saga about a struggle for the Norwegian throne among Haakon, with his tribe of Birchlegs; and Skule, with his Wolfskins; not to mention Sugurd Ribbung and Guthorm Ingesson with *their* assorted Vikings. Though opulence of production is not what won the Guthrie its reputation, the stage, so accustomed to physical grandeur, looked barren and cheap for the first time in its history.

The second presentation of Epstein's first season is another premiere but quite another story. *Teibele and Her Demon* is just the sort of new work that The Yale Repertory Theater, and certainly not the old Guthrie, might have done. This play by Isaac Bashevis Singer and Eve Friedman is an intimate one with a single set and only four main characters. It is about Hassidic Jews—hardly in the Guthrie's tradition of deluxe, Gentile classicism.

Like most Singer, *Teibele and Her Demon* is a fantastical variation on Jewish lore. The play is about the naive and superstitious Teibele, who is seduced by Alchonon, the town *cabala* student (the *cabala* is the Jewish book of mysticism). A Yiddish Clark Kent-Superman, Alchonon is a *schlemiel* by day, but by night he visits Teibele, posing as Hurmizah, the demon of lust. In much the same schizophrenic way, Teibele—a conservative and repressed woman by day—now becomes an abandoned lover by night. Indeed, the demon tells her that in her previous life she had been a whore.

The affair burns hotly during freezing nights in the 19th-century Polish village. Then, in love with Teibele, the "demon" tells her that he has been ordered elsewhere and that she must marry Alchonon. Though distraught, she obeys, but Alchonon disgusts her. When Teibele is told he is the demon, she will not accept it.

There are implications, in this parable, of Singer's view of masculinity and femininity as cosmic concepts—as part of a universal biology. There is also much in it about the irrationality of sexual attractions and about the psychology of roles and conditioning. But as dramatized by Friedman and Singer, the play's great strength lies in its basic theatricality. For this is plain story-telling, and not without comedy. *Teibele and Her Demon* will enchant any audience, anywhere, for it is the very stuff of theater, the sort of play that has us on seat's edge, wide-eyed and laughing as children at a circus.

Stephen Kanee has staged the Singer-Friedman script without frill or pretention, knowing the play's fundamental strength as a tale. He has drawn superb performances from Laura Esterman and F. Murray Abraham in the title roles; from Patricia Fraser and Randall Duk Kim as the pair's best friends. The musical score by Richard Peaslee lends the production atmosphere and, in the final act, raises it to a high theatrical pitch.

But even still, the play seems out of place at the Guthrie. This house is surely no home for a magical and superstitious play set in a Jewish *shtetl*. Either the auditorium is inherently formal or its productions have made it seem so. One must wonder how the Guthrie will fare under Epstein. His first productions are the choices of a director beginning to forge his own theater; but the Ford Foundation built this place as an establishment theater—for Shakespeare and Wycherley and Tyrone Guthrie. Can the Guthrie Theater now go back and start life again? ◉

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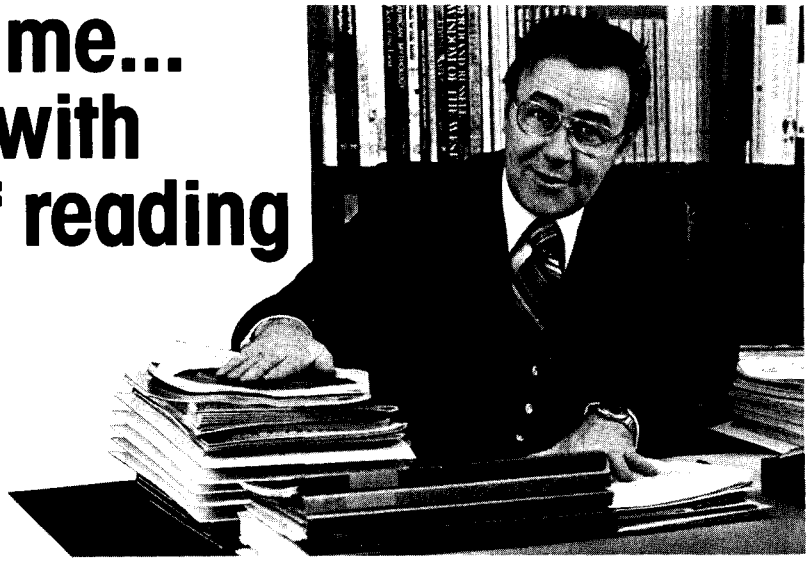

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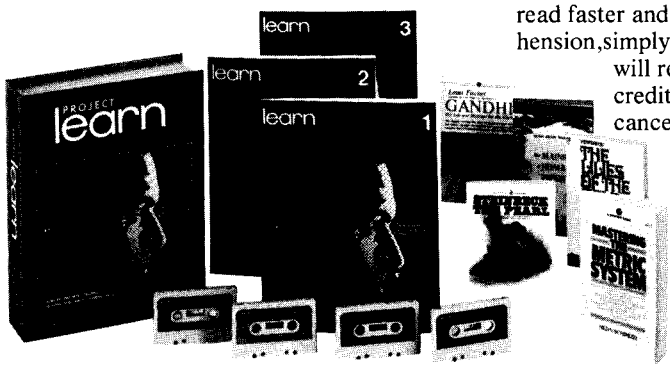

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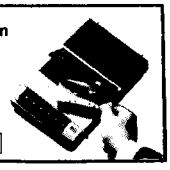

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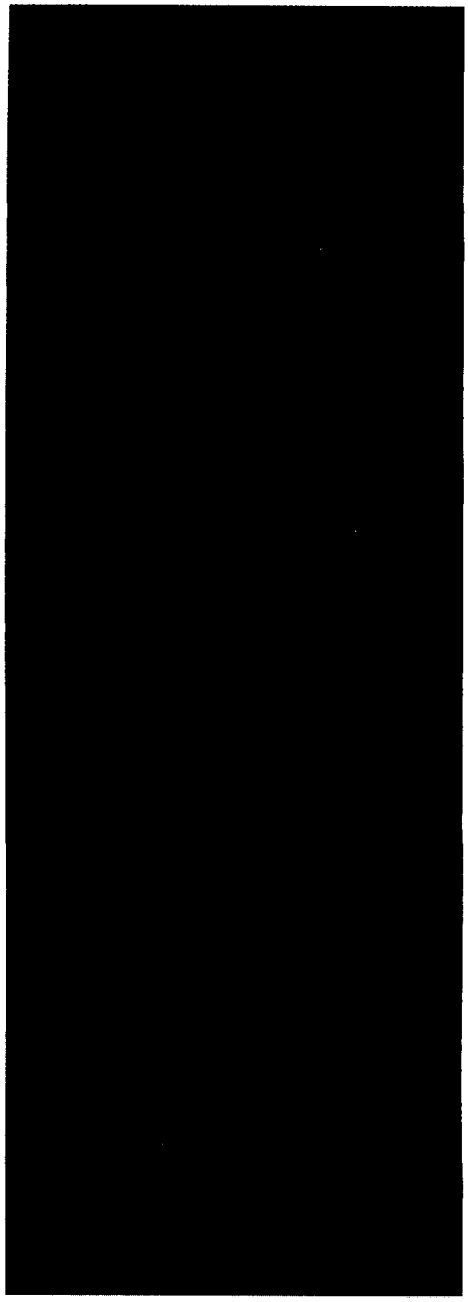
Melancholy King of the Cats

by Stephen Koch

Intellectual life in France has passed through many changes over the past 15 years, and among the most noticeable has been the emergence of Roland Barthes—a professor of linguistics at the Sorbonne, a lecturer at the prestigious and conspicuous College de France, author of numerous densely written literary and cultural studies—as Parisian literary society's king of the cats. Barthes's success over the past two decades has made him far more than a much-admired teacher and writer. He now stands squarely in that center stage of French intellectual culture once held down with such pugnacious energy by Jean-Paul Sartre. But Sartre's career is over; he is ailing, incapacitated, and almost blind. The great polemicist of the post-war era has been led, rather gently, from the stage, leaving a void that has been filled, in his own way of course, by the good professor. With the publication of *A Lover's Discourse* (Hill and Wang, $10), most ably translated by Richard Howard—the book a rather solemn collection of fragments and meditations on the language of love, and on love "as a language"—Barthes's rise to intellectual stardom is now complete. So complete, in fact, that it is becoming fashionable to attack and disparage him, the motivating principle being that while Barthes was on the rise it looked terribly advanced to be on his side, but now that he has arrived, it is a much classier certification of genius to deliver swift kicks to his feet of clay.

Barthes doesn't *look* like an arbiter of high style. At 63, he is not a young man—a fact that is touching in light of his more perplexed meditations in *A Lover's Discourse*, thoughts which frankly would be more appropriate to a man of 30. But Barthes also appears to have been a rather late bloomer on the rialto of Parisian intellectual life. The numerous photographs published in last year's *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* (a collection of thoughts also translated by the indefatigable Richard Howard, and in my opinion Barthes's best book thus far) show a graying face and a faintly weary Gallic intelligence, the features poised between awkwardness and elegance, the expression touched, kind.

Barthes's rise has been anything but meteoric. He spent his late 20s and early 30s struggling with what appears to have been a serious case of pulmonary tuberculosis, and when not in various sanatoria (far from Paris) he worked at what sound like rather ordinary teaching jobs. Cured of T.B., he taught in provincial (i.e., *still* not Parisian) schools, only making it to *la capitale* at the age of 40, when he became a professor of linguistics and began producing the books and essays that have made him famous. "*La nouvelle critique*," as Barthes's exceedingly dense, self-mirroring style was known at first (it is now not so *nouvelle*) was set in motion by his *On Racine* (in retrospect a conventional, though very brilliant "internal reading," to use our own professorial terminology). There were also the numerous essays on everything from professional wrestling to Garbo's smile to the world "as object," now collected in *Mythologies* and *Critical Essays*, and finally, *Writing Degree Zero*. The latter is a peculiar, moralistic tract calling for a literary style written at "degree zero"; i.e., devoid of any ornament, any "feeling." In its time, *Writing Degree Zero* upset a lot of people with its frigid, distinctly snide sarcasms about the sentimentalities and idiocies of writing at any temperature other than the completely cold; it also had a lot of influence, since the style of the "new novel"—that of Alain Robbe-Grillet especially—seemed to get its legitimacy from just such a theory. The book is an urgent, doctrinaire piece of work. Incidentally, in all of Barthes's own later prose, there is not a single paragraph—or indeed, sentence—conforming to a single one of the book's puritanical asperities. So much for life at degree zero.



Roland Barthes—"Ruling his kingdom, absorbed in his private miracles."

Nonetheless, Barthes's productivity kept up with his extreme energy and intelligence, and celebrity followed his many books and honors. Now, eminence like Barthes's is not the *necessary* reward of energy and intelligence. In the world of cultural politics where, for the moment, Barthes now reigns, an arbiter of taste will find it helpful—almost essential—to have access to a certain kind of magazine. Not just any magazine. The journal should be high powered; it should have a small but influential readership; it should *reek* with authority. It must be

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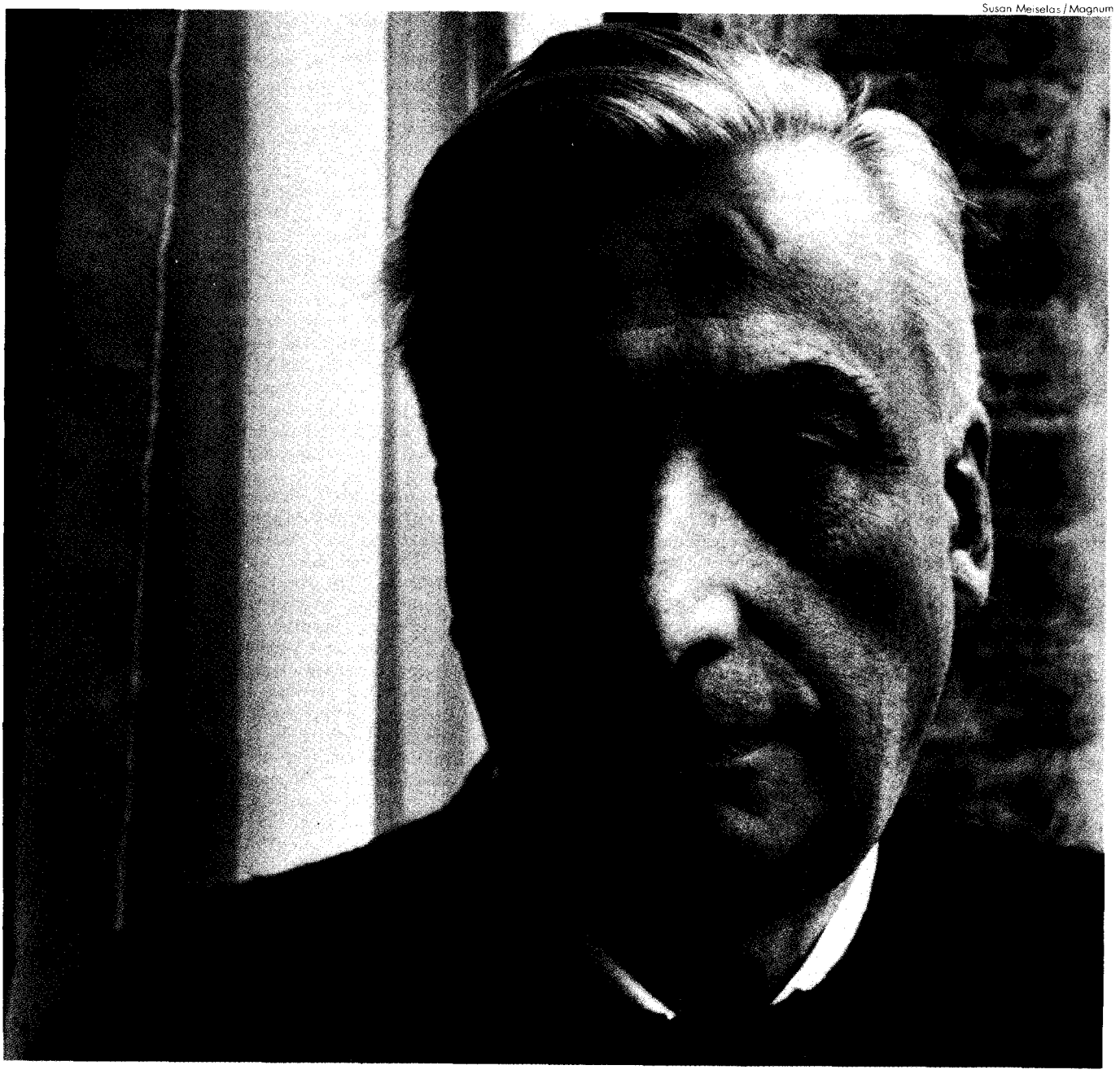
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what people turn to for—whether they understand it or not—the Last Word.

In the case of Roland Barthes, this function was fulfilled by a journal known as *Tel Quel*, a publication whose path down the high road of modern intellectual life has been exceedingly tortuous, its single unwavering focus being a general obsession with all things narcissistic and self-referring. Everything else is flux. Under its editor, Phillipe Sollers, and more recently his wife, Julia Kristeva, *Tel Quel* has kept its striking square format, its vigorous avant-gardism

Its star contributor is Roland Barthes. His career would have been impossible without it. *Tel Quel* is nothing but an instrument of fashion. But we should perhaps not altogether despise fashion. Whatever else, fashion provides focus, and focus in turn provides energy. It may be frivolous and shallow, but it is the indispensable catalyst for a crucial dimension of civilized life: the sense of style. And as we shall see, Roland Barthes is primarily interesting as a *stylist*.

That, however, is not how he is best known in the United States. Here in America, instead of becoming the arbiter of taste he is in France, Barthes has seen his books fly—as Edmund Wilson once remarked that *Finnegans Wake* went flying—direct from his desk (via Richard Howard's) into the classrooms of academe, without even a brief rest in what teachers sometimes wistfully call the "real world." Nonetheless, in those classrooms, he has become *extremely* influential as a "theoretician" of literature.

There is something very depressing about this development—depressing first because of the continuing, and continually more deep division between what is taught in departments of literature and what is actually read and thought by people outside those departments. Depressing, too, is the thought that as literary practice declines, "theory" acquires an ever more pompous prestige.

But leave all that aside. There is an atrocious—and even "theoretical"—misjudgment involved in this elevation of Barthes to the role of theoretician, however much he himself may have

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sought it. I have been a fervent—though often exasperated—admirer of Barthes's writing since I was first handed a copy of *Critical Essays* in 1966. It overwhelmed me then; I still think it one of the dazzling critical achievements of the decade. But after going carefully over Barthes's writing once again, I am struck by how very little of it can be seriously regarded as a genuine contribution to literary or cultural theory in any form at all.

On the contrary. Barthes strikes me as a quite different kind of writer: a highly intuitive, intensely private (even personal) quite unsystematic aphorist and essayist in a very old-fashioned sense. It is true, there is a sort of aging child prodigy's fascination with grandly theoretical-sounding abstractions, but in fact he belongs to the antique tradition that includes Montaigne and Cocteau, a quite traditional man of letters—an animator of taste, stylist, vagrant commentator, phrase maker, master of revels, mediator, gadfly. Take, for example, this book on love, *A Lover's Discourse*. Is it an important contribution to the "theory" of love? Or of "love as language?" Rubbish. It is a desperate and rather solemn collection of personal meditations, an unwritten novel on *a* love affair, by a very intelligent man for whom the veil of abstraction is a reflex, a necessity, a way of life. Amid the shifting, searching, very grand observations, one sometimes glimpses the affair that provokes them (an affair with an indeterminate abstraction named X, the relationship obviously homosexual, and for that reason probably all the more deeply veiled and indeterminant).

The fact is that *A Lover's Discourse* is a collection of fragmented dark thoughts about a deep sense of isolation. It is not about a theory at all, but a dilemma. That it is about a dilemma expressed in language, and language's inadequacies to the logic of need, means only that Barthes is a writer; that it is brilliant, only that he is a brilliant writer. Meanwhile, there is nothing *as* theory in *A Lover's Discourse*, or any other book by Barthes, that comes within hailing distance of (let's say) Max Weber on bureaucracy, or Freud on the unconscious. Even sticking to matters strictly literary, there is nothing (despite a lot of Gallic P.R. about the supposed lack of "rigor" and the "provincialism" of "Anglo-American" criticism) that compares to the theoretical rigor and sophistication of—to choose two long-standing but underestimated "Anglo-American" theoreticians—Kenneth Burke or William Empson. Even on Barthes's own turf, as a theoretician, he is a much lesser figure than Sartre.

But why this obsession with the importance and stature of theory in the first place? Partly, it would seem, the name of a science (or near-science) like linguistics imparts authority; it also helps to produce, if you are an academician, something that looks like a "contribution" to an academic discipline, rather than something that looks only like writing. Barthes's prose—even when it is very good—is shot through with the jargon of a quasi-scientific branch of linguistics known as semiology, introduced in 1916 by a linguist named Ferdinand de Saussurre. It claims to be a method for analyzing how meaning is conveyed by a given "system of signs"—the most obvious being the various spoken and written languages. But, with a little stretching, semiology can be distended to encompass the analysis of the "signification" of virtually any man-made artifact whatsoever.

As such, semiology is an absolute academic bonanza, combining the triple virtues of being: a) very impressive sounding, b) fairly easy to pick up, and c) applicable to virtually any subject that might chance to come to mind, from the poems of Chrétien de Troyes to the internal structure of beach bongo movies, and is thus a sure-fire system generating a great deal of *very* smart-sounding observations on subjects about which one would otherwise have nothing—or next to nothing—to say.

Now, Barthes himself is the author of a much-admired textbook on this subject (*Elements of Semiology*, 1964), a very dreary little book quite unlike the rest of his writing, but nonetheless widely assigned in classrooms where semiological chat cuts a lot of ice. The book is very much in current academic taste, along with *S/Z*, an almost insanely detailed "internal reading" of a seductive but quite modest short story by Balzac. (The study includes 215 pages of commentary on a 30-page work.)

But aside from that. If Barthes is not especially interesting from the point of view of cultural theory, what is the value, if any, of his writing? I have called him a stylist, an epigrammatist: somebody who forces language into a kind of elegant abstract reverie the better to reflect—often with an elusiveness that is sometimes suggestive and sometimes irritating—on language itself. Example:

> When I read, I *accommodate*, not only the crystalline humor of my eyes, but also of my intellect, in order to reach the right level of signification (the one which suits me).

These "accommodations" — striking very private arcane flashes (crystalline humor?) off what he reads, both in books by others and in his own prose—are the essence of Barthes's very personal style. At his very best (*Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*, *On Racine*, *Critical Essays*, some of his *Mythologies*, some of *A Lover's Discourse*, some of *The Pleasure of the Text*) he is chewing on the same kind of problems that strangle him with jargon, pretentiousness, and bullying ideology at his intolerable worst. Barthes has one big theme, and that theme accounts for both the virtues and the gross faults of this most self-conscious stylist of his generation. Barthes is, everywhere in his work, utterly transfixed by a single paradox: *Language, as the means of human communication, is more an instrument of isolation and self-absorption than it is an instrument of contact and communication*.

The result of this is writing exclusively on the subject of writing, and for Barthes, to speak or to write is to create a separate verbal reality, a "mythology" that proves nothing about life but becomes simply another alien artifact in an alien world. That is why he is so melancholy and uninformative about such matters as sex and love in *A Lover's Discourse*, and why he is so dazzling and exalting on—himself, in *Barthes by Barthes*. Given Barthes's profound pessimism, all we are finally doing in this prose is witnessing, from the outside, the stylish, elegant, brilliant workings of his own self-absorption. It is a breathtakingly intelligent barbershop mirror view of the world, and it has all the mindless glitter, depthless complexity, and emptiness of that view.

Barthes's is a perfectly serious—though maddening—vision. Whether it is a very desirable manner for an arbiter of taste and a setter of academic style is a quite different matter. As a writer who composes his work in a self-conscious rhetoric of brilliance—filled with intellectual one-upmanship and *hauteur* crowned with impenetrable epigrams composed apparently as much for his own melancholy contemplation as for our (hopeless) edification, Barthes has presided over the wholesale collapse of French prose—once admired for its *lucidité*, after all—into obscurantist pretentiousness and comically grandiose posturing.

In fairness, Barthes cannot exactly be blamed for all this. But he can't be congratulated for it, either. He does indeed preside over the scene. But what a

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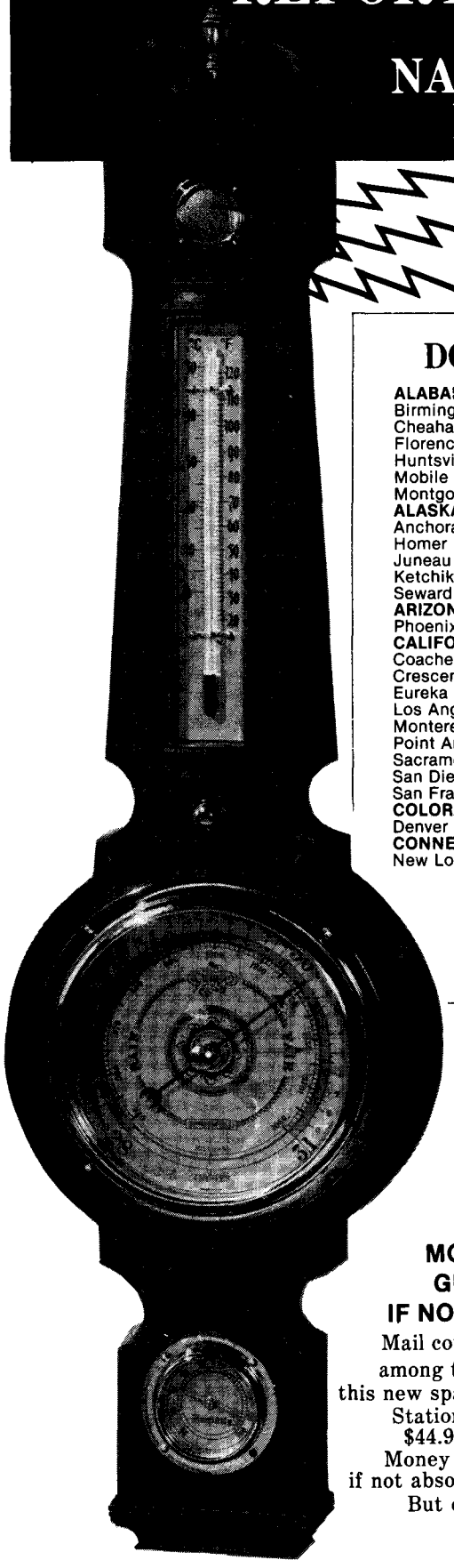

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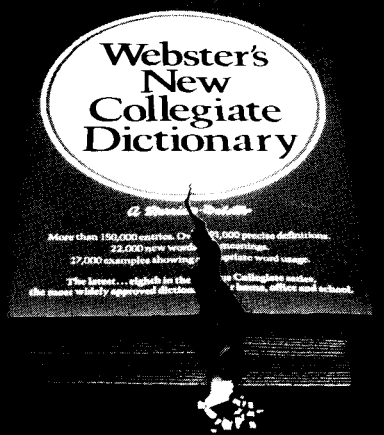

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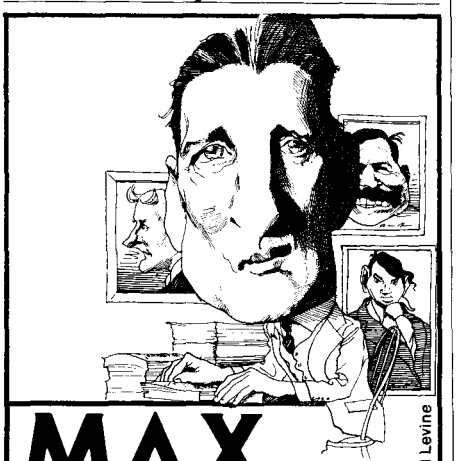
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scene! Barthes's own prose is anything but communicative, and often flatly impenetrable. This seems to trouble the master not at all. After driving his readers batty with elusive mysteries page after page, he can suddenly win forgiveness (mine at least) with a sudden flare of genuinely great critical writing. The style bristles with solemnly intoned rhetorical elevation; like some electric transformer, it hums with a monotonous, straining impulse toward grandiose abstraction. Every experience becomes a Concept; every chance perception, an Idea:

> The stereotype is the word repeated without any magic, any enthusiasm, as though it were natural, as though by some miracle this recurring word were adequate on each occasion for different reasons, as though to imitate could no longer be sensed as an imitation: an unconstrained word that claims consistency and is unaware of its own insistence. Nietzsche has observed that "truth" is only the solidification of old metaphors.

Barthes's attitude toward language is a very tricky business. In the hands of lesser types—his style is now seen, in debased form, all over France, and it is spreading here—it becomes a model for pretentious nonsense, the result of the master's having seemingly suspended the ancient writerly rules about being clear and making sense. Indeed, from Barthes's perspective, there are moments when these simple virtues are treated like a kind of vulgarity, unlike the delicate higher truths of Barthian *écriture*. Not surprisingly, the amount of pretentiousness in current French criticism is now hopelessly out of control.

But Barthes continues, the melancholy king of the (very feisty) cats, the Philip II of criticism, ruling his kingdom from his empurpled private island, absorbed in his private miracles. *"What do I know?"* was Montaigne's question. Barthes has disjoined from that question another one, equally important, *"What can I say?"* Answer: Not much. And he is saying it—with everything immobilized, rather than expressed by a language that is his shield and his prison. Meanwhile, we often do not so much understand Barthes's prose as contemplate its elusive distant glow. When the magic of his isolation isn't working, I must warn that one can come close to jumping the tracks with boredom and irritation. But when the Barthian glow is on, it is a cold, but very beautiful glow indeed.◉

Stephen Koch teaches at Princeton University and is completing a novel.

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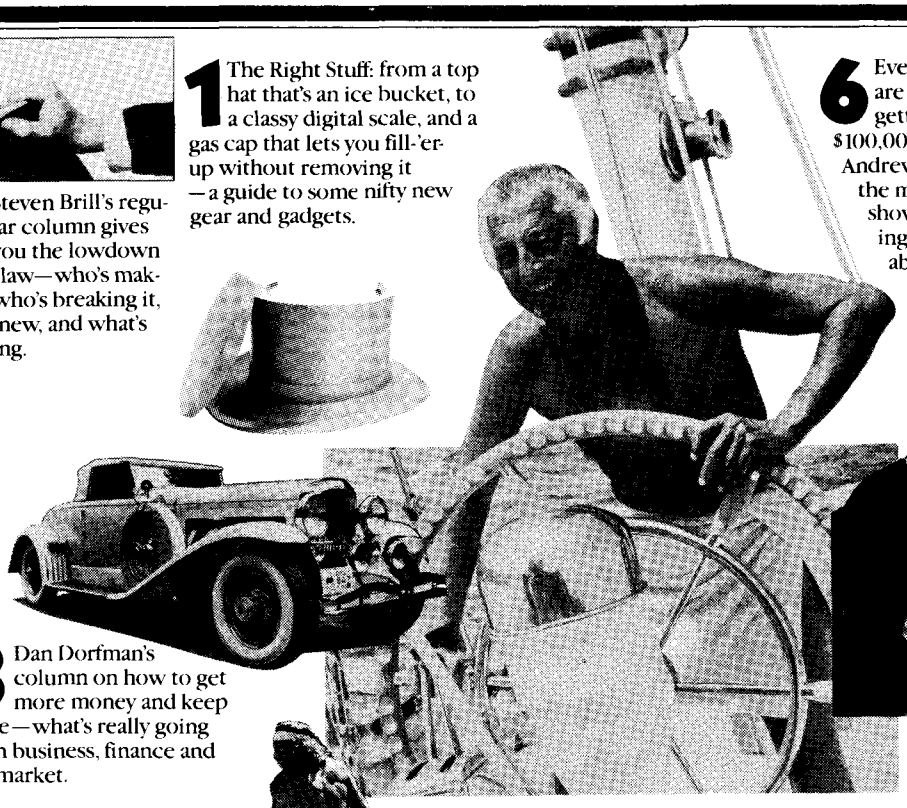

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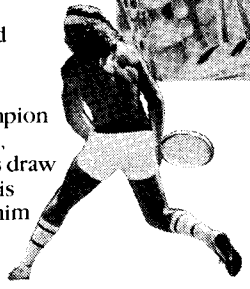

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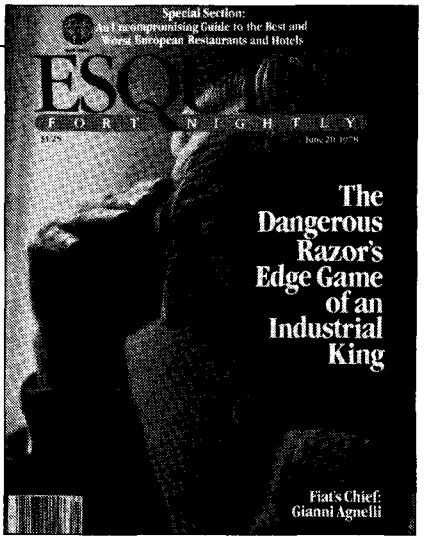

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The Making of a Memoir

In Search of History: A Personal Adventure
by Theodore H. White
Harper & Row, 576 pp., $12.95

Reviewed by Eric F. Goldman

DURING THE PRIMARIES for the presidential election of 1976, Theodore H. White, still "the compulsive notetaker and diarist," worked away gathering material for the next volume in his celebrated *Making of the President* series. But he was becoming more and more restless, as he tells in this book of memoirs (always speaking of himself in the third person).

For years White had delighted in the excitement of the campaigns and "had made it his profession to be the storyteller of elections." Now he wondered about mere storytelling; he hankered to attempt a kind of writing closer to history which, he states, organizes and analyzes facts "to tell 'what it is really all about.'" White was the more discontented because he had become convinced that the assassination of President Kennedy marked a major divide in the American experience, after which politics as the means of defining power gradually gave way in importance to a "changing culture [that] would change those who controlled politics." He laid aside the 1976 *Making of the President* and turned to finishing a manuscript that had been accumulating in his off moments. It was not "really a personal autobiography, for he did not want to explore himself too deeply," not basically a political account but "a long essay" seeking meaning, "a try at fitting together the sights, sounds, persons, and episodes that he had witnessed as he had been whipped around in the slipstream of American power."

The resulting book, *In Search of History*, has its less than felicitous moments. It has long been noted that White is a man much given to heroes and to none more so than John F. Kennedy. No doubt somewhere in the late 1950s and early 1960s the nation moved into a different era, but to make the divide so specifically the JFK years and even more specifically the Kennedy assassination is to seriously downplay a host of other social, economic, and political factors.

Moreover, White, like a number of journalists, throws a special aura around "history." Going beyond storytelling, he writes, it presents arguments and teaches lessons. The simple fact of the matter is that first-rate journalism, such as White has produced for years, and much of first-rate history have in common the characteristic of being essentially storytelling that "argues" and "teaches" not by stopping to lecture the reader but by the points inherent in the flow of its narrative.

In this volume, White, anxious to escape what he considers the confines of journalism, at times pauses for a passage that can be disconcerting—like the one in his section on the mounting revolution in China. He presents the law of "how revolutions begin ... the first real lesson of politics, government and history: governments are instituted among men in the first instance, and accepted by men gratefully, to protect them from random violence and killing." The trouble is that White's own surrounding pages make it quite clear, without announcing lessons of history, that revolutions in the first or in any other instance come from a tangled multitude of circumstances.

Happily, neither White's search for history, nor his proneness for heroes—nor his occasional splashes of neon prose—are major aspects of the book. For the most part, it is a work in the high tradition of American memoirs, written with power and grace of style, many an astute perception, and an attitude toward his country that is at once deeply affectionate, unhesitatingly critical, and engagingly quizzical. It covers White's life from his boyhood in post-World War I America to 1963, a period when he had the luck and the instinct to be where decidedly important events were happening.

White had the good fortune—if he had to be part of an impoverished minority—to be born into an American Jewish ghetto when those enclaves were the home of rampant ambitions that were about to produce remarkable outbursts of creativity in scores of fields. The Jewish autobiographical accounts of "making it" are legion, but none is more revealing than White's opening section. His sure eye for nuance plays over all kinds of facts of the Boston ghetto—whether it be his family's indifference toward the education of the daughter who was assumed not to be capable of her own push upward; his mother's yearning for respectability which had her declaring herself a Republican and a supporter of Barry Goldwater; the ever-looming presence of the Irish, to be reckoned with as "Government"; the parts of old Boston that persisted in trying to do something about these strange Jewish newcomers, personified in the stout, gray, schoolmarmish Miss Fuller, "probably the first Protestant I ever met," who kept opening up exciting possibilities to her promising pupil; or the function of the very elite Harvard University giving scholarships to very bright sons of the ghetto.

Anyone who would understand that institution as a catalytic of the coming Jewish explosion should read White's comments on what were then considered the three groups of Harvard students—the "white men," those of secure high status; the "gray men," the children of the comfortable middle class; and the "meatballs," the poor—especially the Jewish poor. The meatballs were at Harvard "not to enjoy the games, the girls, the burlesque shows of the Old Harvard... the elms," but to "loot"—to loot the university of the learning that lay massed behind its gates and of its abundant offering of opportunities to climb in status.

At Harvard the regular reading room for a popular course was crowded and steaming on weekends. White found his way surreptitiously across the corridor to the little used library of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, occasionally wandering from reading an assignment to pick off the shelves one of the blue-bound, rice paper, bamboo-hooked volumes with exotic calligraphy. His interest in China was roused; when his *summa cum laude* degree won him a traveling fellowship, in 1939, he chose to end up in China. Recruited as a *Time* magazine correspondent by John Hersey, White was on the scene in China for seven years while one of the great upheavals of the 20th century was building.

Correspondent White's dispatches grew increasingly anti-Chiang Kai-shek; editor Henry Luce, increasingly annoyed. When the break came in 1946, once more happenstance and instinct were operating. In 1948 White decided to go to Europe for a congery of reasons, including a bride he was sure would delight in Paris. But a major motive came from his sense that the old center of Western Civilization was being remade. He remained in Europe for five years, again in a theater where fundamental developments of the post-World War II era were under way: the deeply pervasive effects of the Marshall Plan, the reemergence of a strong Germany, the birth of the conception of a united Europe.

From his China experiences, White wrote *Thunder Out of China* (1946); from his European years, *Fire in the Ashes* (1953). Both were volumes of uncommon power and influence, but inevitably they bear the marks of being

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Jeanne Grundberg

produced in the heat of the moment. White's treatment of his Chinese and European years in this book of memoirs is mellower, more balanced, and it provides a constant flow of absorbing personal material.

Most strikingly, *In Search of History* includes frequent incisive, richly human vignettes of the great and not-so-great figures White came to know: Chiang Kai-shek, a man of "ice-stiff self-discipline," combining "Methodist morality" and "animal treachery," filled with an all-consuming sense not so much of nationalism but of Chinese "racial" pride, seeking only to refresh Chinese tradition by Western manners and techniques; Jean Monnet, the full-chested, round-faced Frenchman, now romantic, now acid, an extraordinarily effective coaxer toward the union of Europe, the businessman turned "idea broker...who could sell ideas to almost anyone except de Gaulle"; Henry A. Wallace, " his clean, open face and muscled form instantly attractive to men and women alike," personally full of kindliness but in politics self-intoxicated and self-righteous, a liberal icon who "literally loathed" Franklin Roosevelt for denying him the presidency, one in a line of "evangelical presidency-seekers ... that later ran through George Romney and George McGovern to Jimmy Carter"; not to speak of Herbert O. Yardley, the father of America's cryptographic services, an amiable enthusiast of poker, drink, and women, who explained to White in Chungking what to do when the air raid sirens sounded. Pour a drink, lie down, use two pillows to protect from splintered glass those most precious parts of the body—the eyes and the groin.

In the 1950s White did not need luck or instinct; in 1953 he returned to the United States for personal reasons and because it was obvious that his country had become the energizing force in world affairs. Now he was there when the politics of America were being drastically changed by the emergence to power of the World War II generation, including Lieutenant (j.g.) John F. Kennedy. As White says, whether covering wars or Marshall Plans he had always had a "weakness for political anthropology," and he threw himself into reporting the takeover. *In Search of History* tells how that *tour de force, The Making of the President, 1960,* came about and of White's growing friendship with the Kennedys, which led to the famous interview with Jacqueline Kennedy shortly after the assassination.

I'm afraid I winced as I read White's detailed account of what was actually said during the talk. I am ready to forgive a person in an emotional crisis almost anything, but Mrs. Kennedy's rantings against the "bitter old men" who were going to deny her husband his rightful place in history and the nature of her insistence that the JFK administration really represented "Camelot" are a bit much to take. Yet the session happened, and once more White was the right man at the right place and time; it is certainly doubtful whether Mrs. Kennedy would have spoken so freely to any except the fervidly Kennedyphile White. The interview, presented in restrained and attractive form by White and spread-eagled across *Life* magazine, did a good deal to create the Kennedy legend that proved so potent politically and in affecting ways of living in the United States.

White, his friends agree, is an enormously optimistic man and these memoirs are infused with a sense of the wondrous results of certain basic American ideas, particularly "Opportunity." But the tone changes as the book ends. During a journalistic trip to Boston, White decided to visit his boyhood home. He sat in the cab staring at the house, once a neat haven of family, work, and soaring hopes and now a dilapidated shanty in a forlorn black slum. Thoughts and feelings that had been accumulating in White coalesced. "The 'Opportunity' America had given him to leave this street had somehow left it a plague street, full of fearful black people in an America that did not understand itself."

White indicates that a second and perhaps third volume of memoirs will follow. Naturally calling upon materials from much the same period of time, they will have a different emphasis, asking "whether the old ideas that had made America a nation could stretch far enough to keep it one." If the future volume or volumes maintain the vivid, probing, questing "storytelling" of the first, and White does not search too hard for "history," his total memoirs may well prove one of the bench-mark books—perhaps the *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*—of our generation. ◉

Eric F. Goldman is Rollins Professor of History at Princeton University. A 25th-anniversary edition of his Rendezvous With Destiny *has just been published by Vintage Books.*

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Sorcerer No More

Leon Trotsky
by Irving Howe
Viking, 160 pp., $10

With Trotsky in Exile: From Prinkipo to Coyoacán
by Jean van Heijenoort
Harvard University Press, 164 pp., $12.50

Reviewed by
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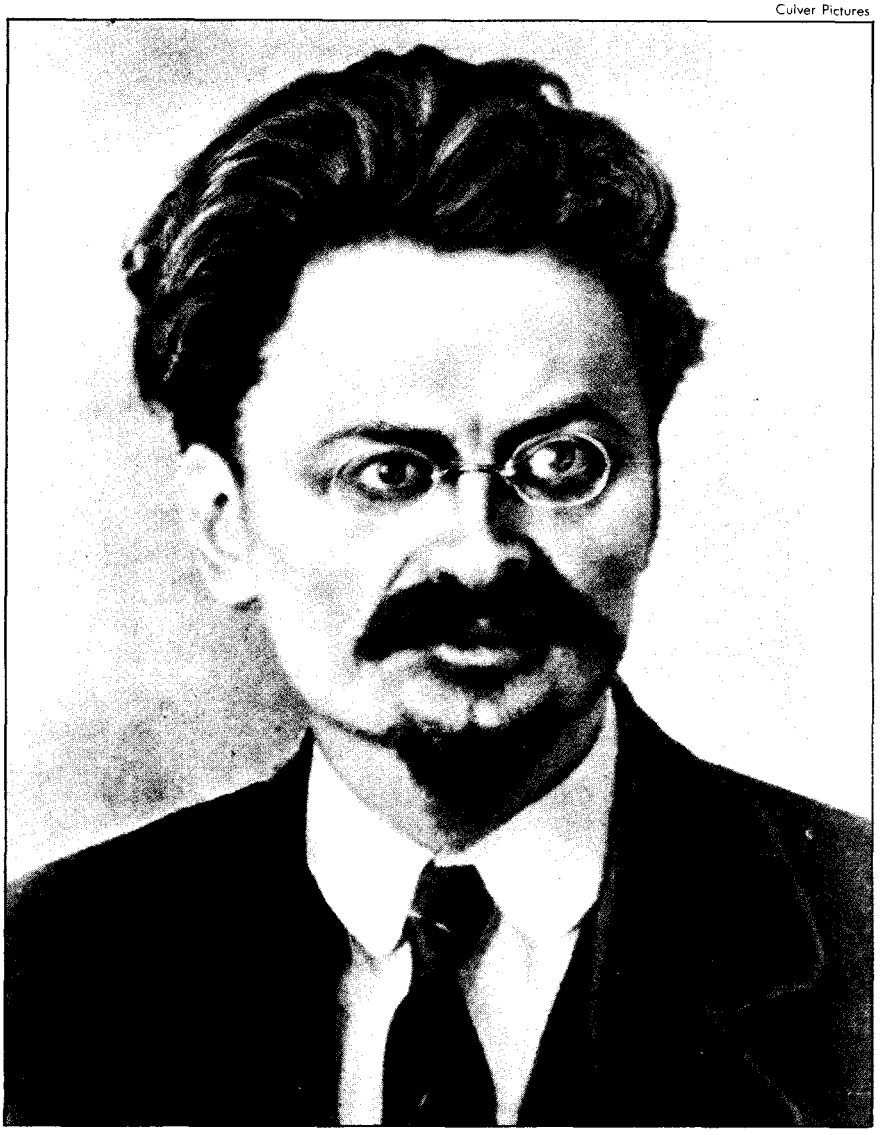
Culver Pictures



IRVING HOWE has written what he calls "a small book on a large subject." His subject, Lev Davidovich Bronstein, appropriated the surname of Trotsky from a Siberian jailer and became, in company with Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, one of the two founding fathers of Soviet Russia, and one of the greatest political thinkers of the century.

Although Howe's subject is large indeed, the modest length of his book is just right. He has not attempted an intellectual history of Trotsky and Trotskyism. Instead, he gives us "a political essay with a narrative foundation," analyzing Trotsky's place in modern history and thought.

Howe tries to be fair, and often succeeds, yet *Leon Trotsky* must be seen for what it is: a critique by a liberal social democrat of revolutionary Bolshevism. The editor of *Dissent* has seen his chance to deliver a reasoned indictment of the events of 1917, and he has taken it. He writes with his usual lucidity and temperance, but his motives are not those of the scholar. Nor does the Trotsky who emerges from his analysis bear a sweet smell. Despite perfunctory bows to Trotsky's "energy and heroism," Howe has traveled many a long mile from the younger self who briefly responded to Trotsky's sorcery four decades ago. The magic is gone.

The only part of Trotsky's thought with which Howe can still sympathize to some considerable extent is the earliest. In contrast to Lenin, who adhered almost from the beginning to the idea of a conspiratorial vanguard party, entrusted with implementing the will of history, the young Trotsky was never a good party man. He warned forcefully against the conversion of the Russian Social Democrats into latter-day Jacobins. On the whole he was surely more of a believer in democratic processes before 1917 than after it. Howe also expresses admiration for Trotsky's prescient formulas for grand revolutionary strategy in the pre-1917 years. Almost alone, Trotsky correctly assessed the feebleness of Russia's bourgeoisie and the vital revolutionary potential of her proletariat. "Of all the Marxists it was Trotsky who best foresaw the course of events in Russia."

The irony of Trotsky's life and thought is that he also foresaw the impossibility of preserving the revolution in Russia without the aid of a revolutionary West. Without that, a democratic and socialist Russia was doomed, since the proletariat constituted an insufficient political base and the Russian economy was too weakly developed. Conditions unique to Russia would permit a minority party to seize power, but not maintain it. Yet as war minister, Trotsky went on to take personal leadership of the successful struggle against the White counterrevolution, and helped construct the Soviet state as a bureaucratized one-party dictatorship in which all dissent, and ultimately even his own, was crushed. As a democratic and socialist republic, Russia did not survive the failure of revolution in the West. Trotsky himself was one of the chief agents of her transformation into a tyranny.

At least so runs Howe's argument. The crucial mistake, he contends, was Lenin's and Trotsky's decision to exclude the socialist opposition from power in the fall of 1917. Their establishment of a one-party regime, taking advantage of the disarray and pusillanimity of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, eradicated all hope of a democratic post-revolutionary polity. From this fatal act of revolutionary *hubris* came not only the terror of War Communism in 1918-21 but also the consolidation of the party-state bureaucracy after 1921. This bureaucracy and its allies in the technical-managerial class "had sprung up the very morning of the revolution." Howe insists that Trotsky cannot escape his share of responsibility for such a tragedy. Flushed with power, Trotsky was all too ready to join Lenin in consigning

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their rivals to the "dustbin of history."

But what else could the Bolsheviks have done? Howe understands as well as any historian the weakness of democratic socialism in the Russia of 1917, the awesome pressures of war, the threat of White reaction, the imminent collapse of public order everywhere. Clearly, Howe wishes that October 1917 could be played over again with the forming of a coalition government of all socialist parties, but he is too much the realist to give his revised scenario much chance of success. "It is just barely possible," he writes, "that Russia would then have kept to a democratic course." But for how long?

After 1924 Trotsky's power faded quickly. In 1929 he went into permanent exile, and in 1940 a Stalinist agent assassinated him in Mexico. These last sixteen years are anticlimactic in Howe's analysis. Although he admires Trotsky's penetrating criticisms of the Stalinist new order and his early awareness of the danger posed by German fascism, Howe argues that the exiled Trotsky's political judgment was spoiled by his inability to repudiate the fatal mistakes of 1917-24. The Leninist pot kept calling the Stalinist kettle black, and lost credibility in the process. Only in some of his later writings, above all *The History of the Russian Revolution*, which Howe describes as "the single greatest work of history in the Marxist vein," did Trotsky put his years of exile to best advantage.

Those same years are the burden of Jean van Heijenoort's personal account of Trotsky and his household from 1932 to 1939. Scholars will discover useful scraps of information in this memoir by one of his secretaries, but reading it is something of a chore. Now a professor emeritus of mathematics, van Heijenoort recalls his former employer without nostalgia. In a moving Afterword, only one paragraph long, the author reports how he finally reached conclusions identical to Irving Howe's and left the Trotskyite movement. "I came to ask myself whether the Bolsheviks, by establishing an irreversible police rule and obliterating all public opinion, had not prepared the soil on which the huge and poisonous mushroom of Stalinism had grown." Becoming a mathematician allowed van Heijenoort to preserve his inner equilibrium. "Bolshevik ideology was, for me, in ruins. I had to build another life." ◉

W. Warren Wagar is chairperson of the history department at SUNY-Binghamton. His latest book is World Views, *a study in modern intellectual history.*

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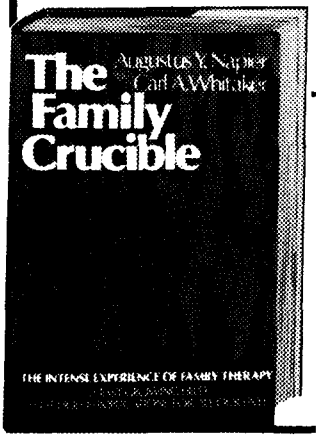

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by Ellen Schwamm
Knopf, 224 pp., $7.95

This wonderfully intelligent first novel yields delight, wisdom, and a renewed appreciation of the writer's craft. Ellen Schwamm has lent dignity to the most banal of situations—a clandestine love affair between two highly educated, middle-aged, married New Yorkers, set against a background of chic dinner parties, art galleries, and jogging in Central Park. Desire awakens during a lecture at an unnamed institution resembling The New School, where Tom is the imposing teacher, Natalie the reverent student. The remarkable ingredients are Schwamm's cultivated eye, her gift for language and timing, and her austere choice of detail, which make both major and peripheral characters vivid, palpable, and thoroughly sympathetic.

Beyond the immediacy of passion, the novel has resonance in broader spheres. Schwamm keenly depicts marriage's ambiguities and compromises, universal problems that in their witty particulars are especially redolent of the current scene. Tom, a prominent critic, feels he has failed his wife sexually, yet feels she has failed him equally by her narrow-mindedness, while Natalie, a translator from a family of Hungarian radicals, has bargained for comfort by marrying a kindly but unexceptional computer engineer. When she loses the stern grandmother who raised her, Natalie is catapulted into emotional crisis that Schwamm delineates unsparingly. Thus the love affair, though woven close as a cocoon, must find space in the larger patterns and meanings of the lovers' lives. Ultimately the bonds of family and shared history prevail, severing the pair and reinforcing their marriages. But as in classic novels of passage, we have assisted at a labored transformation of character. Though Tom will once again be "driven to persuade the world of his worth," Natalie, who began the ordeal as a student, ends taking her place at the podium, as a teacher.

—LYNNE SHARON SCHWARTZ

The Further Adventures of Brunhild

by Rebecca Kavaler
University of Missouri Press, 172 pp., $10

An award given for the first time this year by the Associated Writing Programs (a nationwide group of university-based members) for a collection of short fiction honors a writer of extraordinary talent and vision. Rebecca Kavaler's stories, with an introduction by Wallace Stegner, forcefully stun us into recognition, fright, wry amusement, and most often, a profound sense of unease regarding the stability and benevolence of family, or more generally, human ties. In every highly charged situation she examines, Kavaler undercuts unquestioned assumptions and "makes it new," with a merciless eye and a wit that can peel hypocrisy bare in one ripping phrase.

The outstanding stories in the collection, "Give Brother My Best" and "A Director's Notes for a Play in Three Acts Tentatively Entitled 'One Man's Meat Is Another Man's Family,' " are historical panoramas of nuclear families replete with every imaginable offense: an adolescent boy prostituting himself, carelessly aimed guns crippling the wrong target, self-induced abortion. The stuff of melodrama, yes; Kavaler walks that fine line. Her original handling, though—in the first story, an escaped grown woman's bitter recollections, and in the second, an Olympian, circuitous approach—rescues the material. Severe in outlook (most of her floundering characters are predatory and self-seeking in the extreme), Kavaler nonetheless renders with precision the pain that impels a seductive middle-aged woman or a spaced-out neglectful young mother. Or, in a lighter vein, the bewilderment of a highly "civilized" couple at the barbarism of their young son in "The Meat Eaters." The bleakness of subject matter—parents and children, brothers and sisters misunderstanding, hurting, teasing, and frustrating one another—is everywhere redeemed by the exuberance and dazzling complexity of the writing, as if presenting emotional horrors so well might help to dispel them. The tensions between style and content animate these virtuoso stories with a rare excitement.

—LSS

The Family

by David Plante
Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 301 pp., $8.95

Daniel, the adolescent boy who opens David Plante's sixth novel, dreams two contrary dreams simultaneously: He must quickly lock the back door to protect against the dangers of outside, and he must flee in panic from his house in Providence, Rhode Island. By the book's close both nightmares have come true: The unity and strength of the Francoeurs, an insular, tightly bound, devoutly Catholic, working-class family of French-Canadian background—father, mother, seven sons—have been ravaged, both by incursions from outside and by the father's ignorance and intransigence from within. During Daniel's passage to young manhood the family traverses the crises of ordinary life—the father's loss of a job through union disputes and his failure in local politics, the death of a grandmother, the adjustment to a new house—as well as several extraordinary ones: the ejection of one son, and the mother's consequent disintegration.

Plante's handling of his ironic theme—destruction through excessive love, interdependence, and loyalty—is original but risky. Unlike other chronicles in this genre, in Plante's novel the Francoeur family as a unit is protagonist, pulsating organism, more alive than any of its parts. A unique and impressive treatment, yet in subordinating individual characters it attenuates the force of private emotion. Painterly in approach, Plante creates splendid visual scenes; unfortunately this gift, overworked, tends to produce a series of static tableaux. In time, events are subtly interwoven in a drama of muted pain and repressed struggle between the sexes and the generations. But not until its final third does *The Family* gather the impetus and energy to reach a tragic and magnificent climax of an intensity one wishes had pervaded the entire book.

—LSS

Fraser Young
Literary Crypt No. 114

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle.

Q F C E A Q R G U C-
C N Y D Y E Q X A C N U E
Q F N Y D E B W R U Q E U
W X M F Q R H C E M V X-
N A C T E U Q F C E A Q
R G A C E T N Y D Q F C
C D P L Q N E Y
F N C A R D B P L F N M U .

— M R Y U Q E H B C

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FINE PRINT

A Prize-Winning Voice

by Doris Grumbach

UNTIL THE very last of *Uncle* (Houghton Mifflin, $7.95), I thought Julia Markus had written a small masterpiece. *Uncle* has won the Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award, a distinction that has not been awarded for several years. (Winners in years past have been Robert Penn Warren, Elizabeth Bishop, Philip Roth, Willie Morris, and Margaret Walker.)

Julia Markus has a distinctive "voice," a narrative tone and timbre that invest her story with absolute authenticity. I often wonder why it is that some of the notable fictional voices of our time have belonged to Jewish writers: Philip Roth, Bernard Malamud, Grace Paley, Salinger, Bellow— all with an unmistakable sound to their sentences, yet each entirely different from the others. With her short yet impressive novel, Julia Markus joins that company.

The uncle of the title is Irving Bender, a complex, self-sacrificing, lovable man who runs a children's summer camp in Pennsylvania. Of the younger Irv, Markus writes:

> He started from exactly where he was. He got a job at the Jewish Y on Bergen Avenue. General work. His father had been pretty well known there. He had always spent part of each day in the steam. The rich men took to Solly's son. He was thorough, quiet, unattached. One thing led to another. Irv had eyes to see....
> Then the crash came. It didn't hurt Irv. He was a rum-runner. He stood on a boat in the dark while the liquor was unloaded. He held a gun he couldn't shoot.

Irv, the success of the family, loves his brother Babe dearly—gave himself away for him, as the narrator tells us. Babe marries Esther, an ambitious, impatient woman. They have a daughter Suzanne. Babe proceeds to fail at everything and eventually hangs himself. Irv's best friend is Mandy Mershheimer, an entirely repulsive and selfish human being, who, on occasion, takes Suzanne to bed. Suzanne falls in love with Larry Driscoll, a beautiful young man who is loved by Irv.

All of this many-angled love must sound familiar. But the surprising fact is, there is nothing predictable about Markus's story or about her way of telling it. She has a very good ear for Jewish-American speech and a fine eye for the details of Jersey City life, summer camp existence, and Miami architecture. Irv's apartment comes to life on her page:

> The hallway extended to infinity in both directions. The dog knew the way. Rushing after him, she [Suzanne] heard the high-pitched hum of the hushed, carpeted place. The dog stopped; she opened the door to 1416.
>
> More static electricity from the wall-to-wall carpeting and the central air conditioning. The walls and floors were shades of cream and yellow, the furniture the best available in wicker and pastel. Exotic plastic plants told the familiar story of seasonal occupancy. Except for the many prints that lined the walls, the blank place won out against the poacher.

We are privy to Irving Bender's tortured, lonely, yet financially successful life from his sixteenth year to his dying in his sixtieth. Then, Suzanne wants to take him from plastic Miami to his beloved Rose Lake Camp but, "The setting of his death was nothing to him. At that moment she [Suzanne] was sure he would die there among the others. The tears stopped. He looked past her. 'I am not what I started out to be,' he said in rage and shame."

Only in the final section did I feel a certain disappointment at the barrenness of detail, a feeling that the story had used up its richness before its conclusion. What remained was strained and somewhat attenuated. Irv's poignant "I am not what I started out to be" saves the scene in one sense, but it comes too late: We have already felt the poverty of Irv's last ideas.

Otherwise, this is a fine novel, an achievement in the correct placement of fictional voice, and a moving story of the Jewish-American experience.

Jan Morris is one of the best travel writers alive. I return often to her superb study of *Venice*. Now, to properly celebrate Oxford University Press's 500th birthday, a landmark few institutions in world history have achieved, Morris has put together a charming anthology, *The Oxford Book of Oxford* ($13.95).

You do not have to start this book at the beginning; any page, any section is self-contained. But if you do have a compulsion to read chronologically, you can begin with the quotations from several histories of the great university that place the date and the circumstances of its founding variously. Morris has written informative and witty introductions to each quotation on or about Oxford.

She has selected well. We read that Dr. Johnson, asked by Boswell what he would say if he were told that his "Dictionary would be superseded by one written by a *Scotch Nonconformist* living at *Oxford*," replied: "Sir, in order to be facetious, it is not necessary to be indecent." We learn that John Ruskin asked, "What need have the readers in the Bodleian of the ribbed traceries which decorate the external walls? Yet, which of these readers would not think that learning was insulted by their removal?" Matthew Arnold is represented by two long lyrics on Oxford, and there are wonderful anecdotes about Max Beerbohm, Oscar Wilde, Evelyn Waugh, C. S. Lewis, Hilaire Belloc, and a host of other eccentric, funny, devoted lovers of the university and the city.

The Oxford Press has treated the book to its usual elegant style of bookmaking, with that fine (more typically English than American) narrow shape. Only five-and-one-half inches wide, it fits quite comfortably into the hand as one reads. The end pages are copies of nineteenth-century prints of Oxford, taken from the heights of Castle Keep, and the text is invitingly arranged, each section separated from the others by little printer's flowers. Physically and intellectually, it is a satisfying book, a suitable volume for a quinquecentennial celebration. ◉

Wit Twister No. 125

Edited by Arthur Swan

The object of the game is to complete the poem by thinking of one word whose letters, when rearranged, will yield the appropriate word for each series of blanks. Each dash within a blank corresponds to a letter of the word.

Mankind — — — — — —
— a horrid pleasure still
From fashioning — — — —
— — — machines that kill.
— — — — — — —, perfected, ready to employ,
Each waits its own — — — —
— — — to destroy. A.S.

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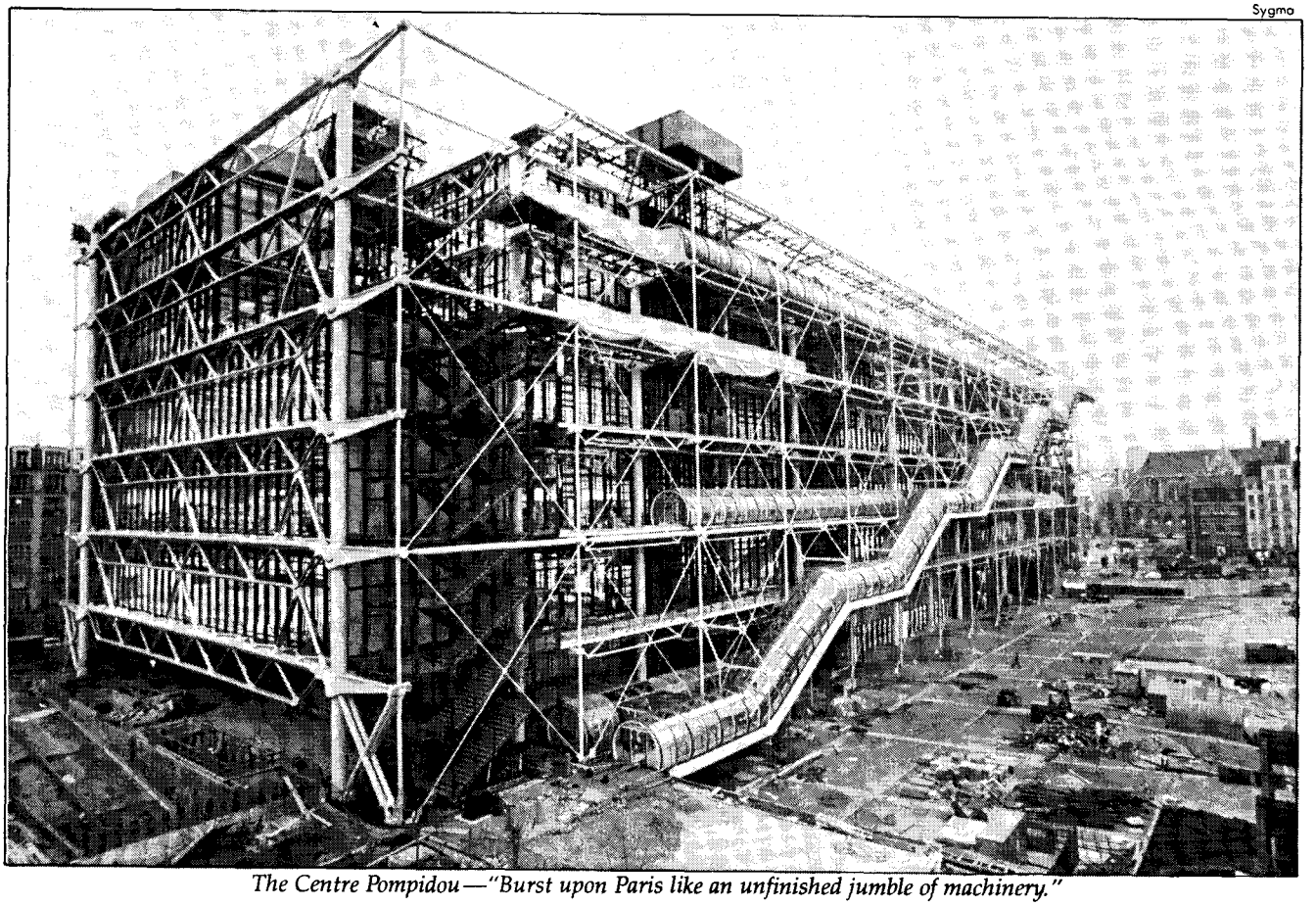
The Pompidoleum

by Horace Sutton



The Centre Pompidou—"Burst upon Paris like an unfinished jumble of machinery."

IF EVER A Frenchman is in need of reaffirmation of the greatness of Gaul, he need only report to the Arc de Triomphe du Carrousel, where the gardens of the Louvre meet those of the Tuileries. There, in a masterpiece of civic planning, one can look through the Arc du Carrousel, begun in 1806 to commemorate Napoleon's victories the previous year, and see the obelisk in the heart of the Place de la Concorde, with the larger Arc de Triomphe at the top of the Champs-Elysées forming a perfect frame for the whole picture.

That splendid view, from Louvre to Etoile, is known as la Voie Triomphale, the triumphal route. It is a gem of symmetry, triumphal as well as orderly. Yet the encroachment of a new Paris upon the old is visible, too, for one can make out the silhouette of a skyscraper deep in the distance, rising quite beyond, but within the frame of, the Arc de Triomphe. That intruding tower is part of La Défense, a $3 billion clutch of high-rise apartments and office buildings that has sprung out of the terrain on the western edge of Paris.

"They are trying to make Man'attin in Paris," a Paris cab driver said to me the other day as we were winging between the Air France plane that had deposited me at the Charles de Gaulle airport and the Inter-Continental Hotel in the heart of inner, traditional Paris.

Attempts made to alter the central city have met with shrill cries against transgressions made upon environment on the one hand and tradition on the other. The shrieks of outrage have not yet subsided over the Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, which burst upon Paris like an unfinished jumble of machinery left there in the middle of the Beaubourg, a plateau between the hills of Montmartre and Belleville. The building has been turned inside out, with all the intestines, normally hidden from public view, hanging on the outside. What's more, the pipes are in a riot of colors: blue for air conditioning, red for elevators, and green for water. The whole mass is suspended from a giant metal scaffold that displays its bare metal bones, too. Escalators, enclosed in tubes of Plexiglas, make their way up the outside walls like giant, inquisitive caterpillars creeping along.

Within its facade of entrails, the Centre Pompidou is, in fact, a national museum of modern art displaying works of the 20th-century from cubism to *hyperéalisme*. The permanent collection starts with Rousseau's Snake Charmer

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and Picasso's 1901 Portrait of Gustav Coquiot, shuffles past Dufy's posters of Trouville in 1906 and his Boats on the Quai at Marseille in 1908 with its indications of cubism. On hand is Picasso's 1910 explosion of lines so evident in Guitar Player. Early Kandinsky and early Chagall, already using bright colors in 1917, electrify the walls, vying with the views of Notre-Dame, Sacré-Coeur, and La Défense itself seen through the glass walls.

Themes of 20th-century life are often on temporary display—urban Moscow was the summer exhibition—and the scope embraces sculpture, engraving, photography, film, and architecture. Nor need one race through the halls between lunch and dinner, for there is an amplitude of restaurants and cafeterias for those who would be recharged between public concerts, seminars, and freelance gallery-viewing.

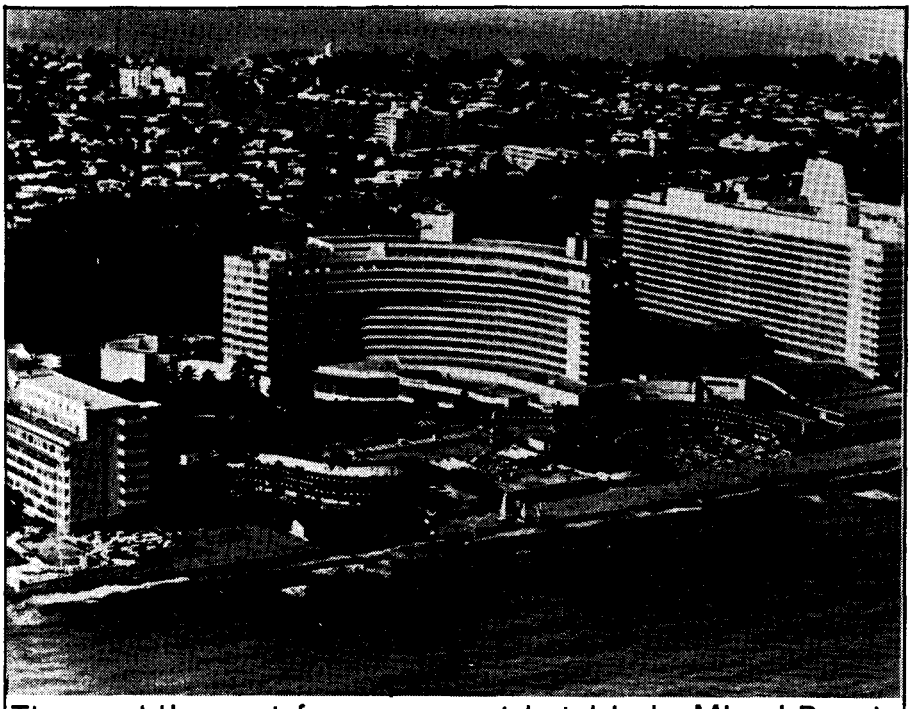
Soon after he was elected president of the Republic, not quite a decade ago, Pompidou declared his intention, or more properly, his desire to create a cultural center for Paris that would bring together all the arts including cinema, music, and literature. A five-acre plot, long in disuse, was chosen. It was near Les Halles, the colorful market, which itself had been razed and packed off to Rungis near the airport at Orly. In a public competition for design, nearly 700 entries flooded into Paris. The proposal of Richard Rogers, an Englishman, and Renzo Piano, an Italian, both in their thirties, was chosen. When the finished work was dedicated, a year and a half ago, the people of Paris took to calling the structure the Pompidoleum—and worse. There were those, on the other hand, who recalled that the Eiffel Tower, when it was unveiled for l'Exposition Universelle in 1889, had been referred to, ungraciously, as an iron suppository.

Whatever the epithets and insults that have been tossed at it, the Centre Pompidou has brought new life to the old Beaubourg quarter, once popular as a neighborhood for workers who labored at Les Halles, and at one time a center of fashion. A broad cobblestone piazza dips down to the entranceway as if to attract patrons as one might invite a flow of water. Such a broad expanse has been a natural invitation to street performers, and on almost any day a visitor waiting for the museum to open, might be entertained by fire-eaters, bed-of-nails walkers, and those tricksters who lie down on broken glass, to say nothing of guitar strummers or a pocket-size circus.

New life has been infused into the streets of this medieval *quartier*; the stout stone buildings have been restyled as apartments and restaurants and galleries. Inviting little corners have been created: one bench, one lamppost—a compelling setting for reading the evening paper. Tiny places like Le Méditeranée offer Tunisian sandwiches and Arab cakes. Au Crèpe Coeur, a minuscule *crèperie* and *salon de thé* will produce a crève coeur, a double entendre that means, on the one hand, a heartbreaker and, on the other, a crepe stuffed with smoked salmon, lumpfish caviar, and *crème fraiche*. Le Palmier en Zinc (potted palms and a traditional zinc bar), will dish up a salad of shredded carrots, chicken curry with rice, and a baked apple on a *prix fixe* menu, the fixed price being $5. Ta-Yen, a Chinese entry, serves *chop suey de poulet*, which is to say, chicken chop suey. Next door, a pizzeria calls itself La Louve Romaine, named for the she-wolf of Rome that suckled Romulus and Remus.

Galleries and poster shops abound. At a tiny theater called Le Plateau, one can see *Hiroshima mon Amour* in French and at the old Gothic church of St. Merri, one can get religion. A 15th-century house of worship done in the rich Gothic style of the time, the church of St. Merri served the craftsmen who lived in the neighboring streets fabricating furs, textiles, millinery, and jewelry. To amuse them there were the *jongleurs*, the street performers whose artful descendants perform today in the piazza in front of the Centre d'Art.

Le Tourtour is a combination restaurant and gallery that puts paintings on the wall, flowers on the table, and serves fresh foie gras of duck, poached salmon, and *oeufs à la neige*. A cafe theater called Nouveau Chic Parisien has opened for the season alongside the flowery restaurant called Jardin Beaubourg. Awash in huge terrace umbrellas, white-washed wrought iron garden chairs, and a mass of botanical specimens, the Jardin is hard to distinguish from a store selling outdoor furniture. The *prix fixe* menu at 45 francs will bring raw ham; a choice of turkey, pork, or beef; cheese; strawberries, and pastries. Ices come in the flavors that evoke the attitudes of Rousseau's tropical settings: guava, ginger, coconut, and passionfruit. You may not find it in the statutes, but it is Gallic law that centers of art are attended by concentrations of gastronomy. After all, in these parts *l'art culinaire* is a true art, too. ◉



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PLEASURES

The Flying Baker

by Horace Sutton

THE OTHER morning, when a proper tourist abroad in Paris would have been at his hotel attacking croissants, butter, jam, and coffee, I found myself in the back room of a bakery on the rue du Cherche-Midi where amid an aroma that would corrupt angels I had breakfast Paris back-room style in the company of M. Lionel Poilâne, the youthful, earnest *proprietaire*. Between us lay a platter piled with slices of crusty, sourdough bread that is baked in round loaves, rye rolls embedded with raisins, and for good measure, some of the house's famous cookies that are flat, decorated with serrated edges, and look as if they had been turned out by a talented aunt at home. Looking down on us from every wall was a clutter of paintings, each of them of Poilâne's breads, contributed by artists who once lived in the quarter and were often required by straitened circumstances to pay their bakery bill with canvases.

M. Poilâne, who was outfitted in a dingy smock, is the last of the Paris bakers to bake in a wood-fired oven, using mill-ground flour, which is fermented from a sourdough starter. His ingredients are, on the face of it, simple enough: flour, water, and salt. But in the days of packaged products and fast foods, Poilâne, who is just 33, travels to the French farms at Teille in the department of Sarthe, to Houdan in the Yvelines, and to Crècy in the Marne to select the wheat he wishes to be stone ground.

He uses sea salt from Guérande near LaBaule in Brittany where the salt ponds, in drying, leave microscopic algae on the seaweed, which imparts to the salt the smell of violets. At Guérande the salt is harvested from spring until the end of summer, and has been considered of unusual quality since it was first used by appointment to Anne of Brittany in the 17th century. It is the special salt that is the prime ingredient in the fermentation, which Poilâne insists is the most important step in the manufacture of his bread.

Between bites of bread, a nibble at a cookie, and a swallow of coffee served in a small soup bowl, Poilâne descended the steps of his 12th-century building to the cellar ovens. There in the tiny stone room stood three young men clad only in shorts and sneakers. Beside them stood a pile of packing crates that Poilâne buys from a box company and uses for firewood. On the floor half a dozen round breads in baskets were lined up, waiting to be put into the oven when the fire had reached the proper heat.

It appears to be the simplest of operations, but to M. Poilâne it is not a business but an art. "We make bread as an artistic expression," he says in acceptable, if halting English. His artistry is admired by other artists who give him special commissions. For Salvador Dali he made a birdcage out of bread and delivered it to Cadaqués, Dali's home on the Costa Brava. He sends bread to Billy Friedkin, the producer, and to Lauren Bacall, for whom he has made bread with her name on it. Paul Austin, the chairman of Coca Cola, prefers a more modest initial. To anyone willing to pay the freight he will accept a bread subscription, air mailing loaves to virtually any corner of the world.

Poilâne's clients include Kinokuniya, a fine food specialty shop in Tokyo. He is in contact with the Chinese to teach them to make bread. The Chinese, he says, are changing their habits about food and beginning to use wheat. His arrangement with China, however, is, as he puts it, "just for intellectual pleasure."

As things stand, there is a waiting list for new customers. The steady buyers include the best of France's restaurants including Archestrat which got its third star this year, Tour d'Argent (though it buys only rye bread), the chic club called Castel, La Coupôle, Le Duc, Taillevent, Olympe, le Bernardin, and a new one called Oursins dans le Caviar. This month he will come to New York City to present his bread at Bloomingdale's. For three weeks fresh bread will be flown from Paris to Bloomingdale's daily.

Those who come to the celebrated epicurean department of the store looking for a crisp, long baguette, which many consider the traditional bread of France, will be disappointed. Poilâne makes no baguettes which he considers a folly—not a traditional French bread at all, but a curiosity that started in this century.

With the world's most fastidious eaters reaching for his bread, Poilâne has no desire to expand. "If I have a factory I cannot keep the same quality," he says. He prefers what he calls a "handicraft size." He makes bread exactly as it was made a century ago. His father passed along the knowledge and he developed the zeal. "It is no secret," he says, "only care." Other bakers find the work, as he performs it, "a little tough."

With his hair parted in the middle and his air of youthful sincerity, he reminds some people of the young Danny Kaye. If Poilâne has any Walter Mitty dreams he seems to be able to translate them into reality. What he always wanted to be was a helicopter pilot, so last fall he bought three choppers that the French air force put up for surplus sale and had them reupholstered. He leases two that provide him with the wherewithal to use the third for his own pleasure. If his personal plans proceed as he hopes, he will marry Irena Ustjanovski, a Polish woman who is an interior decorator now living in New York.

He is the only flying baker in Paris, but then he is also the only baker who chooses his own wheat. If it is hard work to be meticulous, the rewards are the kudos that come from everywhere. Dali once told him, "The best way to find out if I have mice is to have your bread in my house." They won't touch the other stuff. ◉

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OH, CUISINE!

A Very Tranquil Repast

by Madhur Jaffrey

WITH THE ZEAL of a crusader seeking the Holy Grail, I have been searching the world for great restaurants—restaurants where dainty, delectable morsels are served on fine china in tastefully appointed rooms and where discreet (but efficient) waiters appear and disappear with faultless timing.

There are few such restaurants. I found one sitting blissfully in the shabby and somewhat dismal outskirts of Kyoto, Japan. It is called Kitcho and is one of those formal, many-roomed, traditional, and typically Japanese eating houses where a reservation is needed to gain admittance.

Street-soiled footwear is removed at the entrance. Each group of shoeless diners is led to a private dining room provided with sliding doors to insure complete privacy. Our room (I was with my husband), about 14 feet square, was bare save for a low, lacquered dining table and two cushions set on the *tatami*-matted floor. A large window offered the view of a stream and a hill. We had seen them before—a nonchalant stream running by a modest hill in dull suburbia. Like an artfully cropped photograph, the placement of the window had transformed the stream and the hill. Ugly housing had disappeared. We seemed alone with nature's glorious outpourings—gurgling water and gentle green hills rising to meet a blue sky dotted with cotton-ball clouds. The sweet, haylike smell of *tatami* mats perfumed the air. Our small room exemplified the Japanese genius for creating miniature, timeless worlds of great beauty, simplicity, and serenity right in the midst of 20th-century chaos.

The sliding doors behind us opened and closed. There was a rustling of kimonos and two waitresses fluttered in. Act I had started. Small, exquisite, cut-glass wine cups were set down. The waitresses fluttered out, closing the doors behind them. The sherrylike plum wine, slightly sweet and nicely chilled, had been made at the restaurant. It was soothing, reassuring, and quite excellent.

Act II introduced us to a kind of Japanese epergne, borne by one of our waitresses. At first glance it seemed like a vase, with greenery protruding from it; then it looked like a miniature garden set on a tray. It *was* a tray of sorts, a rectangular, ceramic tray with a central stand. Four holes in its corners held stalks of fresh, green wheat. There was another treelike floral arrangement on the tray and below it a matching pair of whole, green limes. In front of the limes lay what looked like six-inch lengths of slim bamboo. Our waitresses poured us warm *sake* in shallow cups and, once again, withdrew.

When we "uncapped" our limes, we found them to be filled with fresh abalone in a deliciously tangy mustard dressing. We scraped all the way to the bottom with our chopsticks and wished there were more. The "bamboo" sections turned out to be ceramic containers with lids. Inside, neatly divided in three compartments so that one flavor might not encroach upon another, were three different kinds of caviar. (We had let Kitcho's chef select all our courses.)

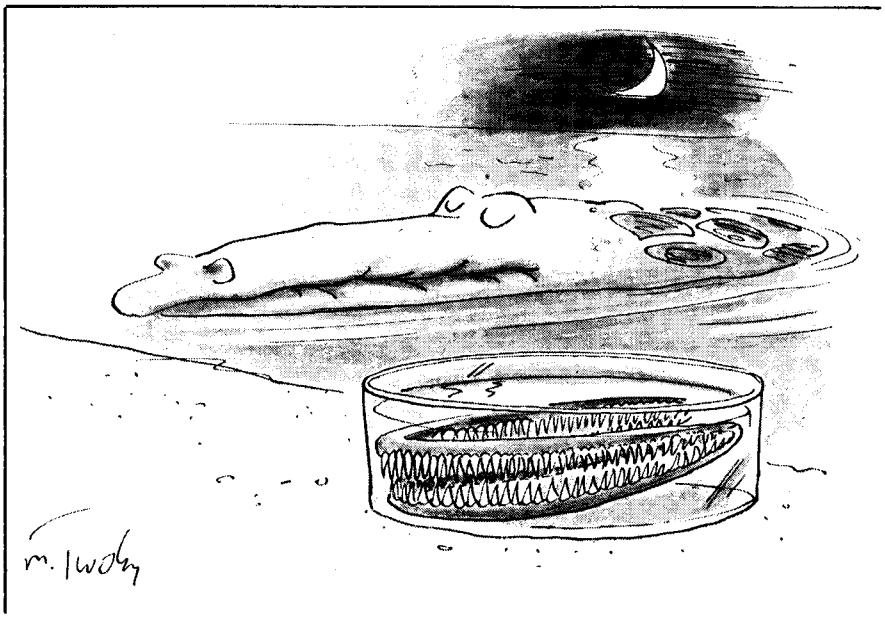
Act III brought two lacquer bowls holding beds of ice. Thin, overlapping slices of raw salmon, topped with equally thin, overlapping slices of lemon, covered the ice. As our chopsticks went flying out to greet the newest offering, more warm *sake* was poured into our cups.

Act IV. Two dark, covered lacquer bowls this time. Our waitresses sat back on their heels and uncovered our bowls for us. Wisps of fragrant steam uncurled like tendrils. This was turtle soup, real turtle soup which, unlike the thick, dark "mock" version thrust upon unsuspecting guests in European hotels, was pale, delicate, and ethereal.

Act V demanded audience participation. We were confronted with heated, curved stone tiles and plates holding beautiful arrangements of sliced raw beef as well as assorted raw vegetables. The cooking was left to us. The fire-hot tile hissed intermittantly as meat juices dripped on it and the entire room was filled with the pervasive aroma of browning beef.

The finale, Act VI, came in two scenes. First a scoop of green snow—crushed ice with green tea syrup poured over it—served with a topping of sweetened red beans. Then, still-life arrangements of fruits on plates—an orange each as well as a bunch of purple grapes. When we touched the orange, we found that the entire skin came away in a spiral. Inside, the fruit had been cut into segments, seeded, and then put together again. The "bunch" of grapes had also been composed. Each grape had first been separated and seeded. Then, a fine knife had been slipped in and moved around between the skin and the flesh. When we put a grape to our mouths, we could suck in the sweet, rounded flesh and leave the coarse skin in our fingers.

We applauded silently. After such a meal, the hurly-burly of modern Kyoto, indeed of the whole world, could be faced with greater equanimity. ◉



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Editorial: Cop-out Realism

ON ALL SIDES, one sees evidence today of cop-out realism — ostensible efforts to be sensible in dealing with things as they are but that turn out to be a shucking of responsibility.

Example: Until fairly recently, off-track betting was illegal in New York State. Gambling on horses was regarded as a disguised form of stealing, run by professional gamblers who preyed upon people who could least afford to lose. Also outlawed was the numbers game, in which people could bet small amounts of money on numbers drawn from the outcome of the day's horse races.

Attempts by government to drive out the gambling syndicates had only indifferent results. Finally, state officials decided that, since people were going to throw their money away despite anything the law might do to protect them, the state ought to take over off-track betting and the numbers racket.

It is now possible to assess the effect of that legalization. The first thing that is obvious is that New York State itself has become a predator in a way that the Mafia could never hope to match. What was intended as a plan to control gambling has become a high-powered device to promote it. The people who can least afford to take chances with their money are not only not dissuaded from gambling but are actually being cajoled into it by the state. Millions of dollars are being spent by New York State on lavish advertising on television, on radio, in buses, and on billboards. At least the Mafia was never able publicly to glorify and extol gambling with taxpayer money. And the number of poor people who were hurt by gambling under the Mafia is minuscule compared to the number who now lose money on horses with the urgent blessings of New York State.

A second example of cop-out realism is the way some communities are dealing with cigarette-smoking by teenagers and pre-teenagers. Special rooms are now being set aside for students who want to smoke. No age restrictions are set; freshmen have the same lighting-up privileges as seniors.

The thinking behind the new school policy is similar to the "realism" behind New York's decision to legalize off-track betting and the numbers game. It is felt that since the youngsters are going to smoke anyway, the school might just as well make it possible for them to do it in the open rather than feel compelled to do it furtively in back corridors and washrooms.

Parents and teachers may pride themselves on their "realism" in such approaches. What they are actually doing is finding a convenient rationalization for failing to uphold their responsibility. The effect of their supposedly "realistic" policy is to convert a ban into a benediction. By sanctioning that which they deplore, they become part of the problem they had the obligation to meet. What they regard as common sense turns out to be capitulation.

Pursuing the same reasoning, why not set aside a corner for a bar where students can buy alcoholic beverages? After all, teenage drinking is a national problem, and it is far better to have the youngsters drink out in the open than to have them feel guilty about stealing drinks from the cupboard at home or contriving to snatch their liquor outside the home. Moreover, surveillance can be exercised. Just as most public bars will not serve liquor to people who are hopelessly drunk, so the school bartender could withhold alcohol from students who can hardly stand on their feet.

It is not far-fetched to extend the same "reasoning" to marijuana. If the youngsters are going to be able to put their hands on the stuff anyway, why shouldn't they be able to buy it legally and smoke it openly, perhaps in the same schoolroom that has been converted into a smoking den?

We are not reducing the argument to an absurdity; we are asking that parents and teachers face up to the implications of what they are doing.

The school has no right to jettison standards just because of difficulties in enforcing them. The school's proper response is not to abdicate but to extend its efforts in other directions. It ought to require regular lung examinations for its youngsters. It ought to schedule regular sessions with parents and youngsters at which reports on these examinations can be considered. It ought to bring in cancer researchers who can run films for students showing the difference between the brackish, pulpy lungs caused by cigarette smoking and the smooth pink tissue of healthy lungs. The schools should schedule visits to hospital wards for lung cancer patients. In short, educators should take the U.S. Surgeon-General's report on cigarettes seriously.

In all the discussion and debate over cigarette smoking by children, one important fact is generally overlooked. That fact is that a great many children *do not* smoke. The school cannot ignore its obligation to these youngsters just because it cannot persuade the others not to smoke. It must not give the nonsmokers the impression that their needs are secondary or that the school has placed a seal of approval on a practice that is condemning millions of human beings to a fatal disease.

Still another example of cop-out realism is the policy of many colleges and universities of providing common dormitories and common washrooms for both sexes. The general idea seems to be that it is unrealistic to expect young people not to sleep together. Besides, it is probably reasoned, if people are old enough to vote they are old enough to superintend their own sex habits. So, the thinking goes, the school might just as well allow them to share the same sleeping and toilet facilities.

The trouble with such policies is that they put the school in the position of lending itself to the breakdown of that which is most important in healthy relations between the sexes—a respect for privacy and dignity. No one ever need feel ashamed of the human body. But that doesn't mean that the human body is to be displayed or handled like a slab of raw meat. Sex is one of the higher manifestations of human sensitivity and response, not an impersonal sport devoid of genuine feeling. The divorce courts are filled to overflowing with cases in which casual, mechanistic attitudes toward sex have figured in marital collapses. For the school to foster that casualness is for it to become an agent of de-sensitization in a monstrous default.

The function of standards is not to serve as the basis for mindless repressive measures but to give emphasis to the realities of human experience. Such experience helps to identify the causes of unnecessary pain and disintegration. Any society that ignores the lessons of that experience may be in a bad way.

—N.C.

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LIGHT REFRACTIONS

In Conclusion

by Thomas H. Middleton

THIS IS my third and, I hope, last column in defense of what are referred to these days as "gay rights."

In recent weeks, several cities have repealed statutes that gave homosexuals equal rights under the law; Anita Bryant and her husband have announced that they plan to spend much of the summer trying to convert homosexuals to heterosexuality; and in my last column, I quoted a man who had written to me, saying, among other things, that "making homosexuality respectable will only cause this contagious disorder to spread and infect otherwise well-adjusted and innocent people."

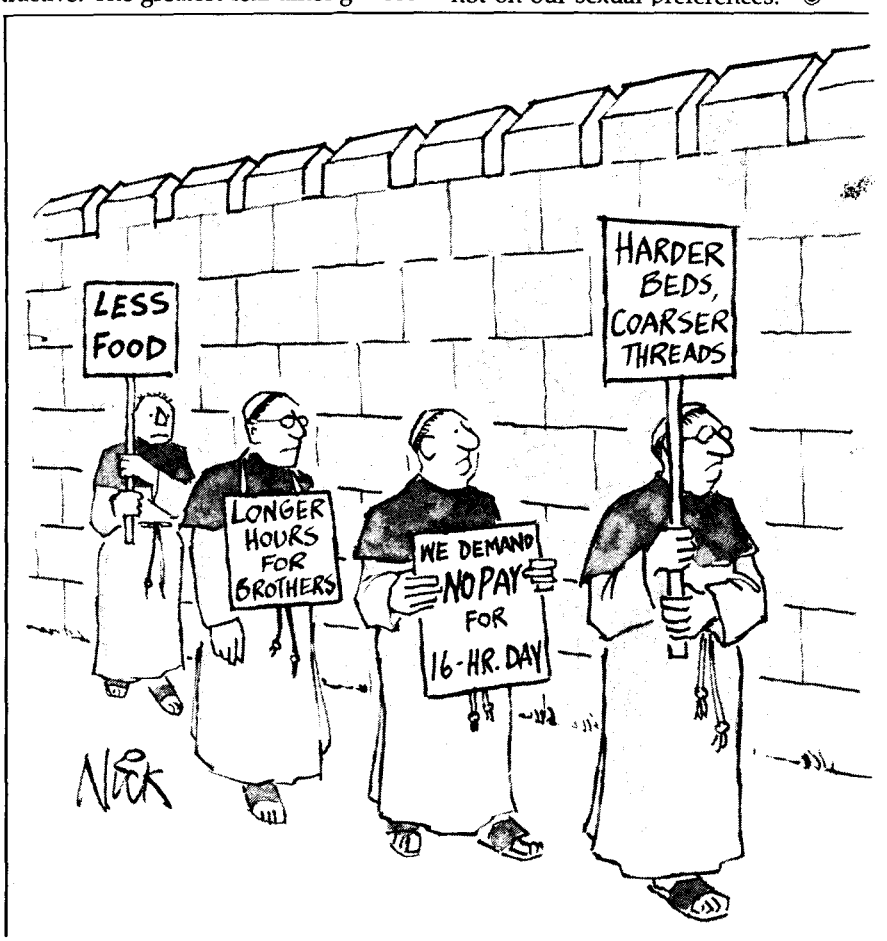
It seems to me that all of this antihomosexual activity is rooted in misunderstanding.

No one knows what causes homosexuality. It may be genetic or it may be rooted in some undiscoverable childhood influence. It should be obvious, however, that heterosexuality is the norm and that homosexuality is the normal drive for only a small minority. It's equally clear that this small minority has never had a particularly easy time of it. I should think it reasonable to say that only the tiniest fraction of the world's homosexual minority actually made a conscious decision to be homosexual.

In *Crimes Without Victims* (1965), Edwin M. Schur says, "There is definitely no sure and simple cure for homosexuality, and the dominant view is that in most cases therapy can at best only make the patient a better adjusted homosexual."

Recently, I had a telephone conversation with Peter Judge, a local spokesman for the rights of homosexuals. One of the things he said was, "No one ever filled out an application to be homosexual." That, it seems to me, is an important point. He also described something I'd never given much thought to—what it's like for a youngster as he comes to know that his sexual orientation is different from that of most of his contemporaries. The boys ask the girls to dance; they date; they pair off naturally, experiencing varying degrees of affection and tentative sexuality. It is at this time that the homosexual boy (let's call him Bill) begins to feel there is something wrong with himself. Bill's attraction is not toward girls but toward boys. He finds this disturbing, but there is nothing he can do about it. He is ashamed to tell anyone—surely not his parents. He looks among his group of friends, hoping to find someone who will not only understand but perhaps share his feelings. If he finds someone to whom he thinks he can explain these troubling emotions and he lets himself be known, he runs the very high risk that he might have misread his friend. If he has, it is virtually certain that his friend will spread the word that Bill is a queer. From that time on, Bill's adolescent life will be hell, and if there are other homosexual boys in his class—as there almost certainly would be—they would probably be too frightened even to speak to Bill lest they be unmasked.

All things considered, I can't understand why so many of us seem to think that heterosexual, "well-adjusted and innocent people" would find life as a homosexual in any way seductively attractive. The greatest fear among those who favor antihomosexual laws seems to be that homosexual teachers will influence their students, persuading them to join the ranks of homosexuals. But, as Judge said, "No one ever filled out an application to be homosexual." There is no question that there have always been teachers, some superb, some dreadful, who've been homosexual. There surely must have been some few who have tried unconscionable intimacies with their charges, but that is at least equally true of heterosexual teachers. In any case, I think the teacher who advocates a sex life—be it hetero- or homosexual—to a group of schoolchildren should be fired outright. But I hope the day will soon come when homosexuals are accepted as neither wrong nor criminal, are no longer fired, harassed, beaten, or imprisoned simply for being homosexual—in short, when we are mature enough to rate one another on our social and professional performances and not on our sexual preferences. ◉



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NOTES FROM THE BLUE COAST

Quite a Piece of Ameringlish .hopefully

by Anthony Burgess

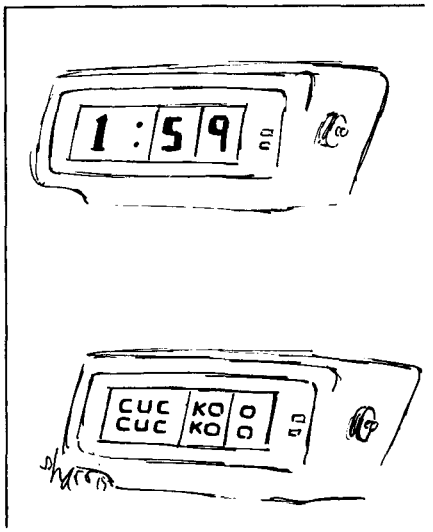
THOSE OF YOU who are good enough to read my contributions to *Saturday Review* will be aware, from the way I use or misuse the English language, that I am British. I say *misuse*, by the way, not in the spirit of giggly British self-disparagement that asks to be contradicted, but as objectively as is possible in an area where there are no absolute standards. Some years ago in a novel I produced this sentence: "Then, instead of expensive mouthwash, he had breathed on Hogg-Enderby bafflingly (for no banquet would serve, because of the known redolence of onions, onions) onions." This was generally regarded as misuse of the language: English is not supposed to behave that way. Gertrude Stein's famous double pleonasm about a rose is also still taken in some circles as misuse or abuse. I will not argue about this. I will merely say that what is often called misuse need not really be—for this is the implication of the charge—ineptitude. A correspondent in a London Sunday supplement wrote the other week: "English is still a beautiful language, despite Mr. Burgess's prose." Mr. Burgess has been writing prose for a long time, and if he produces discords, it is not because he does not know the concords. But let that pass.

A British writer writing for American readers learns to adjust to the differences that are supposed to divide our two nations. I instinctively write "color" and "honor" (omitting the "u") and talk of attorneys and sidewalks, instead of solicitors and pavements. There are certain aspects of American usage, however, that I find hard to adapt to. One is the invariable form *fit*, which the British still inflect in the past tense ("The suit fitted very well"), though they do not put "putted," unless someone has taken a putter to a ball. Another is the use of *quite*. *Quite* means thoroughly, completely, finally, irreversibly, as in "He was quite dead" or "You're quite wrong." When an American editor writes to me to say "We are quite pleased with your article," he means that he and his colleagues are unqualifiedly pleased, which chimes in with "quite dead." But to a British ear the *quite* there sounds lukewarm. "She's quite pretty" seems to mean "She could be prettier." "Quite good" on an examination paper is pretty tepid. British people expect color emphasizers like *terribly* or *awfully* (though not *horribly*). But Americans are right and go straight back to Elizabethan usage. There is something anomalous about usage that makes "quite dead" and "quite well written" belong to different slots of intensity.

I have to be increasingly on my guard against the unconscious adoption of *hopefully*, which is, I see, more or less accepted now as correct usage in the sense of "let us hope." I found myself the other day saying on the telephone, "Hopefully he'll see the light," and this is the way we yield to new usage—borrowing other people's speech rhythms, accepting solecisms in talk and, much later, shrugging and letting the typewriter clatter it out. The trouble is that *hopefully* in the sense of the German *hoffentlich* kills *hopefully* in the primary sense of "full of hope." I refuse, because of this killing of an older and still necessary usage, to countenance the homosexual use of the word *gay*. The Gay Liberation Movement has asked me for help on occasions—chiefly in connection with a blasphemy charge in England against a poet who presented Christ as an object for homosexual love—and I have hesitated because of my rage at this act of verbal appropriation. I have used *gay* quite (meaning moderately) often in earlier writings of mine, always with the traditional meaning, and I am upset, rereading these things, to see how formerly merely happy characters have now become homosexual.

Pedantry, pedantry. Yes, writers, having a vested interest in words, tend to pedantry. There is a limit to the propriety of rejecting new usage, or abusage, but it is not marked by a metal sign. I am publishing a book this year mainly for the purpose of rebuking people, usually journalists, who misuse the word *Orwellian*. Now, I don't think a word like *Orwellian* is in the same category as a word like *hopefully* or *gay*. *Orwellian* refers to a body of writings by George Orwell, and it cannot well be applied to things or tendencies or ideas either not found in those writings or, as more frequently happens, totally opposed to what Orwell thought or imagined or stated. A world of computers is called Orwellian, so is a new airport like Dallas International. By *Orwellian* is specifically meant some property present in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which the loose users of the term seem not to have read. There are no computers in that novel, and certainly no shining big airports. Everything is shabby, like Leningrad, and that's the whole point of the story. The effulgent reality is in the collective brain, not in mere skyscrapers or machines. When some college kid announces that a ban on pot-smoking in class is "like *1984*, man" or that being forced to read books is "kinda Orwellian," this is linguistic abuse quite different from making *gay* mean sodomitic.

Real pedantry doesn't consist in insisting that *Mozartian* refer to rococo elegance and not to the vomitings of punk rock. It consists in confronting the natural processes of semantic change with the Bible of Dr. Johnson's Dictionary. Britain, I fear, holds back too much, fears new coinages and grammatical twistings—shows, in fact, pedantry where there is none of the scholarship that partly justifies the pedant. It seems to me that American English represents the full potentialities of the mixed tongue of Alfred the Great and William of Normandy. It is only when Americans try to write seriously, in the sense of solemnly, that they achieve a stale-bread ponderosity that no one in Britain—which is no longer permitted to take itself seriously—can approach. What I mean is that Ameringlish is the norm and Britinglish something of a dead scene. That is why it's a good thing for British writers to have to write for Americans. ◉



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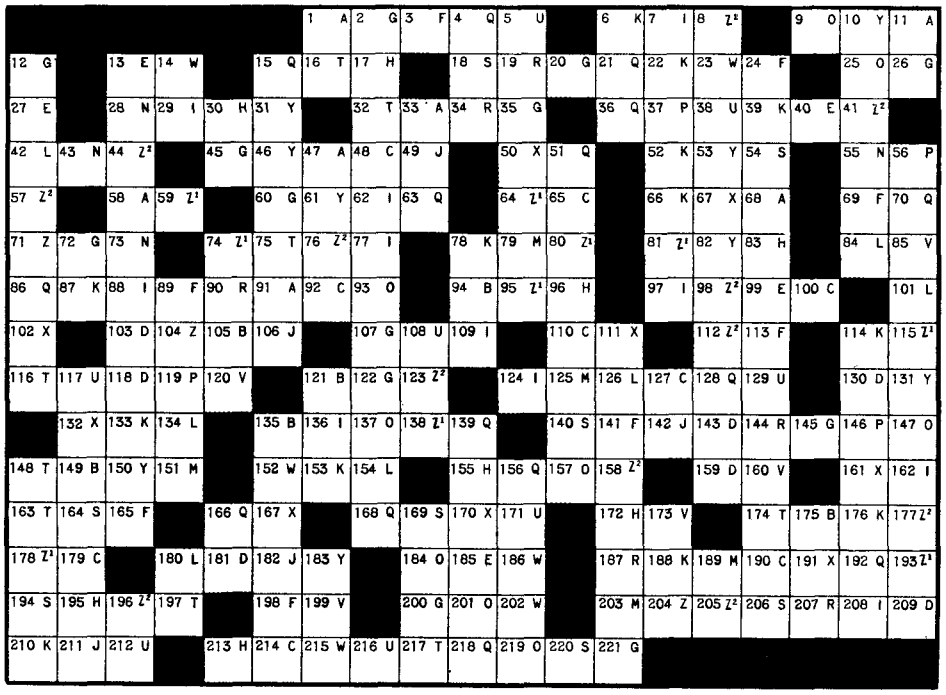
DOUBLE-CROSTIC

Number 154

by Thomas H. Middleton



Instructions:

If you've never solved one of these puzzles, it will probably look much more difficult than it actually is. If you can answer only a few of the WORDS correctly, you're on your way to solving the puzzle. Fill in the numbered blanks of all the WORDS you can guess and write the letter of each numbered blank in its correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. The letters printed in the upper right-hand corners of the squares indicate from what WORD a particular square's letter comes.

The diagram, when filled in, should read as a quotation from a published work. The dark squares are the spaces between words. If there is no dark square at the end of a line, a word may carry over to the line below.

The first letter of each WORD, reading down, will spell the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken.

You should find yourself seeing words and phrases taking form in the diagram; so you can work back and forth, from WORDS to diagram and from diagram to WORDS, until the diagram is filled in.

Answer to ***Double-Crostic No. 153*** appears on page 54.

CLUES	WORDS
A. Silent film star who made a spectacular comeback in 1950	1 11 33 47 58 68 91
B. Healths	94 105 121 135 149 175
C. Swaps	179 214 92 100 110 127 48 65 190
D. Kind of musical piece for the bagpipe	118 130 143 181 209 103 159
E. Fine whetstones	185 13 27 40 99
F. Narrative poem by Keats	113 141 165 24 69 89 198 3
G. Play by G.E. Lessing (3 wds.)	12 26 60 72 107 122 145 200 221 45 2 20 35
H. Skill, dexterity	83 96 155 172 195 213 17 30
I. American writer, playwright (*Having Wonderful Time*, full name)	62 88 124 7 29 109 136 162 208 77 97
J. Diving birds of the genus *Gavia*	106 142 182 211 49
K. "Life is a jest; and all things show it. / I ___; but now I know it" (3 wds.; Gay, "My Own Epitaph")	66 133 188 210 39 52 6 114 22 78 153 176 87
L. Gave; proposed	101 180 42 84 126 134 154
M. Desert, northern Saudi Arabia	189 203 79 125 151
N. Debatable	28 43 55 73
O. When the proper moment arrives (3 wds.)	137 219 9 147 157 184 201 25 93
P. English poet and dramatist (1674–1718; "The Fair Penitent")	146 37 56 119
Q. Bavarian printer, believed to be first to print illustrated books (c. 1420– c.1470; full name)	168 36 166 192 218 4 15 63 86 51 70 139 21 128 156
R. Seasoning related to onions, used in soups, salads, omelets, etc.	187 207 19 34 90 144
S. German director who had a great career in Hollywood (*Ninotchka*)	164 140 169 194 206 54 220 18
T. Italian anatomist (1524?–74)	174 163 197 217 75 148 32 16 116
U. Partial; unfair (comp.)	117 38 171 216 108 212 5 129
V. Deceived, tricked	199 173 85 160 120
W. Ruff worn around the neck in the 16th century	14 23 152 215 202 186
X. Seaport, Suffolk, England, famous for china	170 50 161 167 111 132 67 102 191
Y. Chiefly (3 wds.)	46 82 31 61 150 183 10 53 131
Z. Gazelle of the Tibetan plateau	71 104 204
Z¹. "Thy belly is like an ___" (3 wds., Song of Solomon 7:2)	95 138 81 178 59 80 115 64 8 193 74
Z². Play by William Henry Sedley Smith (2 wds.)	196 112 158 41 44 98 57 76 177 205 123

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THE BACK DOOR

Seriously

SERIOUSNESS SEEMS to be developing a bad name these days. More and more one hears the adjective used opprobriously. ("This article is too serious." "Oh," says the talk-show producer, "so-and-so's too serious for television.") The tautological "serious-minded" conjures up visions of a sour puss at a cocktail party, decrying the unhealthfulness of alcohol.

I was reminded of this recently while watching a friend and former professor, Robert Penn Warren, "perform" as a guest on the Dick Cavett show. Talk shows, even when hosted by personalities as agreeable and literate as Cavett, are no place for seriousness. The eye of the television camera craves concision—anecdotes, jokes, statements, rather than musings. Speaking in front of a TV camera, one can sense an impatience like that of a dour pencil-tapping school teacher waiting for the student to "get to the point." A serious person, though, may find worthwhile points difficult to make quickly—the truth, as he sees it, being imprecise and complex.

This is not to say that Warren was uninteresting or unintelligible on television; merely, unspecial—a smiling, craggy-faced, fast-mumbling transplanted Tennesseean, with a clutch of honors and more than 32 books to his name, and a large store of memories. He was "unique" to the extent that any other human being is unique: characterized by an irreplicable assortment of facts. Why anyone should *particularly* care about Warren's career could not be communicated via airwave. As far as the TV camera was concerned, the quality of his books was of no importance as long as his conversation was engaging.

What makes Warren, the man, invaluable is not the facts of his life or even the books he has written (they now have lives of their own). What makes him invaluable is his seriousness and the books he will write because of it. For more than half a century, Warren has been investigating a certain notion, a hunch that life holds some meaning, some value beyond the mere facts of existence and that that meaning can be dramatized, if not explained. In words from his soon to be published *Now and Then Poems*:

Have stood on a high place, yearning
To know what logic of years, and of
Whatever stride, clamber, climb,
Had brought me here to be what I am;...and all
I recall is the shadowy thought that
Man's mind, his heart, live only by piecemeal, like mice
On cheese crumbs—the cheese itself, of course,
Being locked in the tin
In God's pantry.
("Identity and Argument for Prayer")

In poem after poem, novel after novel, Warren has been investigating his hunch with almost obsessive consistency. He or his surrogate characters experience a moment, and the moment seems to mean more than itself, to be a clue to some larger, otherwise elusive meaning. The struggle to convey that meaning never succeeds—

My eyes fill with tears. I have lived
Long without being able
To make adequate communication.
("Mountain Plateau")

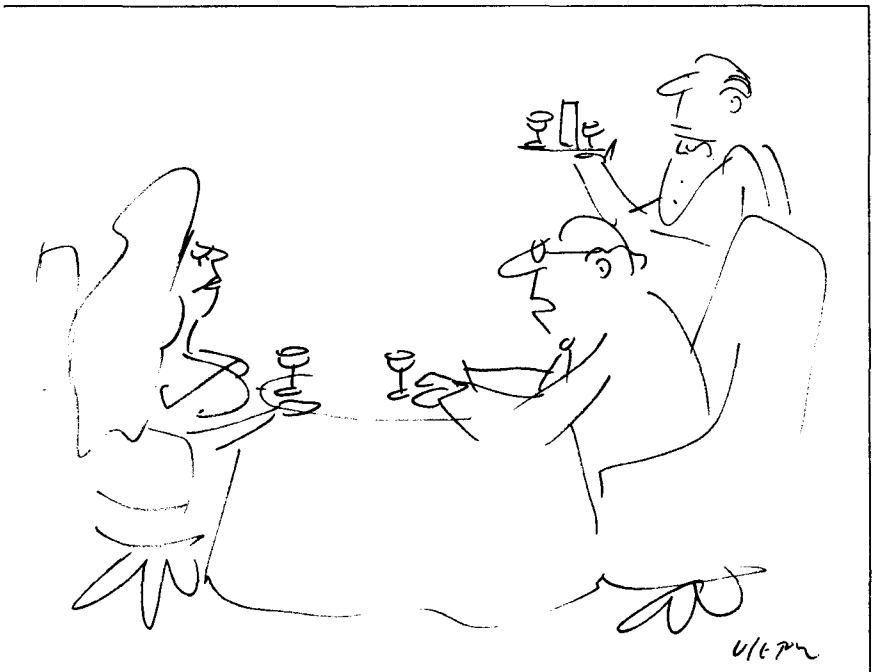
—but that scarcely matters. What matters is making the effort, believing that life is important enough to deserve to be taken so seriously.

Seriousness is not an attitude particular to poets. One can be serious about any subject—from pottery to publishing to putting to parenthood. Seriousness is simply the (by definition, irrational) belief that some activity is more than a job or a pastime, that it is worth doing and doing well for some deeply felt and often inexpressible reason, and that that activity is worth thinking about.

Serious does not mean solemn. (Woody Allen is a serious filmmaker). Serious does not mean philosophical. (I know several "serious" tennis players who cannot speak sensibly.) One can be earnest without being serious (i.e., determined simply to get a job done). Seriousness is, indeed, a form of obsession, of extreme caring, of love.

There are people who take nothing seriously. They work to make a buck. They hack at pastimes. They may do what is expected. They may be competent workers or amiable companions. But they do not enlarge life by believing that some aspect of it is worth taking seriously. I prefer serious people. And am grateful for the existence of models of seriousness, like Warren, who demonstrate that a serious commitment can last a lifetime without souring to unconcern or bitterness.

—CARLL TUCKER



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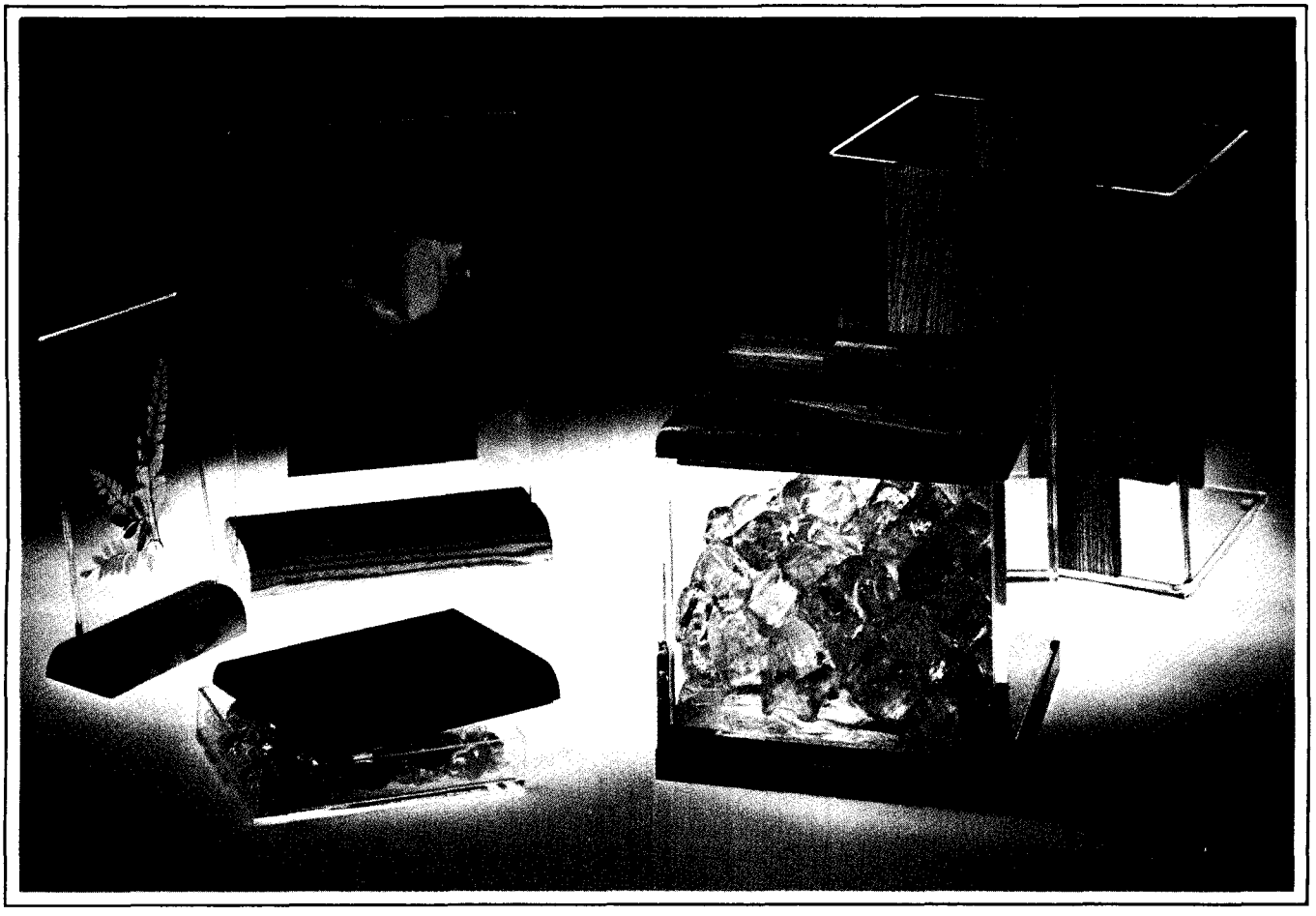

Picture Frames The cleverly "folded" frames act as envelopes to house 5 x 7 photographs. Or, 8 x 10 pictures in the larger version. Just tuck the frames into the grooved bases. Clearly ideal for diplomas, stamp sheets and certificates. Back-to-back things in the envelopes for coming-and-going viewing! Complete size, 5" x 8" and 8" x 11", at $10.95 and $19.95 respectively.

Cigarette Box or, Etcetera Box, because its uses go on and on. Wonderful for candies and nuts, or treasures and trinkets. Bold, yet simple. Hefty, but comfortable. 6¼" x 5" x 1¾" high. $14.95

Ice Bucket Put this honey on your bar for a round of applause as well as drinks. It's a watertight container and self-insulating. And filled with cool ideas. It makes a terrific planter, and a natural for flowers. Sensational to showcase treasured memorabilia and trophies. 8" x 8" x 8". $64.95

Wastebasket This beauty stands on its own when it comes to catching compliments. And, what a wonderful gathering place for magazines and newspapers to keep them neat and handy. Nice too, to display dried flowers and leaves. 10"x6½"x10" high. $39.95

Why not order your Contemporary Classics in Zebrawood and Lucite right now! If you're not pleased, return them for a prompt refund.

Zebrawood An exotic, beautifully grained hardwood from the jungles of Guiana, South America.

INFORMATION FOR ORDERING:

# 8001 **Wastebasket**	@ $39.95 ea. + $3.75 p&h
# 8002 **Cigarette Box**	@ $14.95 ea. + $1.65 p&h
# 8003 **Frame (5x7)**	@ $10.95 ea. + $1.50 p&h
# 8004 **Frame (8x10)**	@ $19.95 ea. + $1.90 p&h
# 8005 **Ice Bucket**	@ $64.95 ea. + $5.35 p&h

To order, give item number as indicated and use list above for price and shipping. New York and Iowa residents only, please add sales tax. Send your name and address, enclosing check or money order to: THE CHARTER GUILD, LTD., Dept. **865,** 1419 West Fifth Street, Wilton, Iowa 52778

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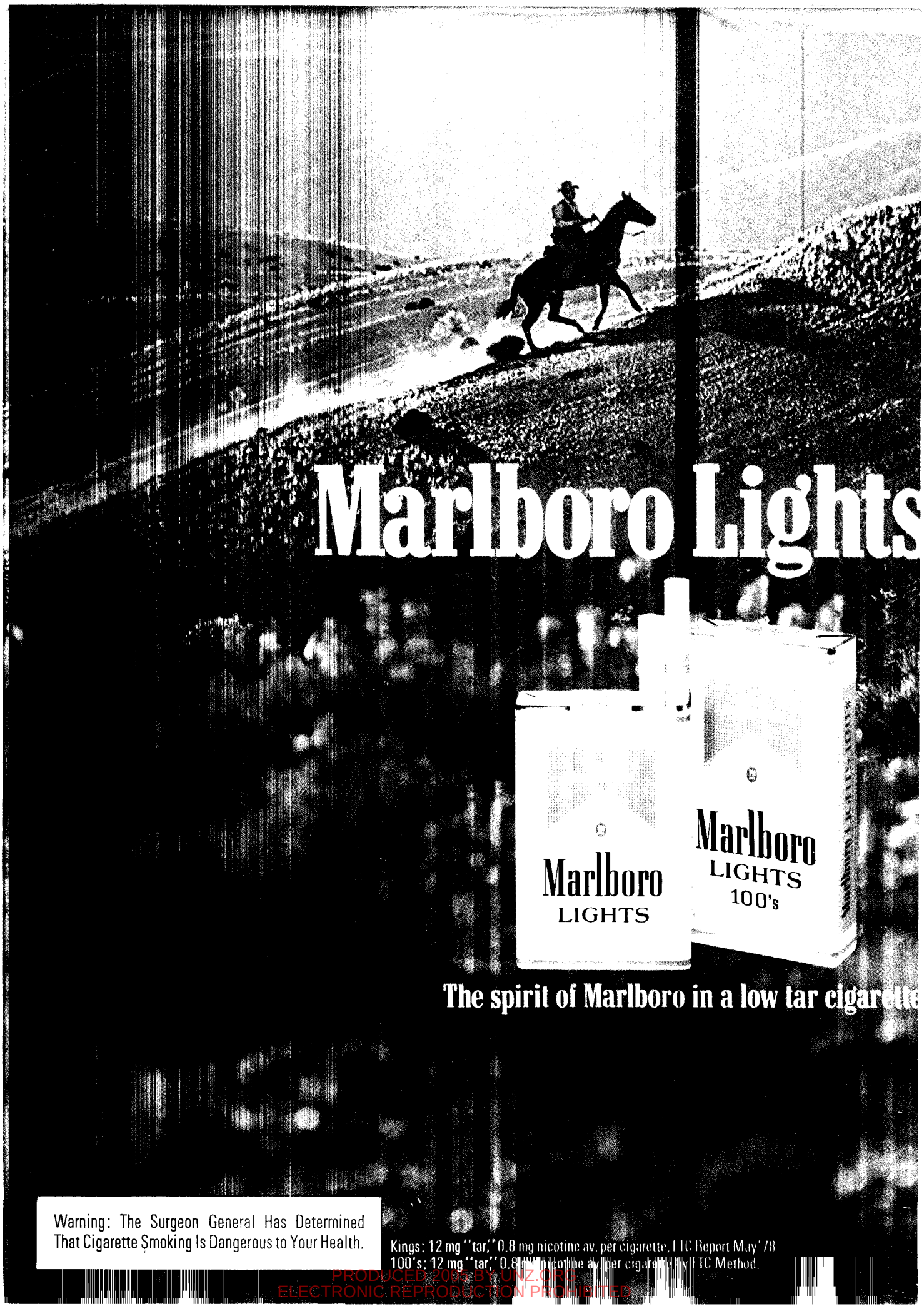
Marlboro Lights
Marlboro
LIGHTS
Marlboro
LIGHTS
100's
The spirit of Marlboro in a low tar cigarette
Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.
Kings: 12 mg "tar," 0.8 mg nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '78
100's: 12 mg "tar," 0.8 mg nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC Method.
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